THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR

VOLUME IV

Cursed Kings

VISIT...

Jonathan Sumption

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The Hundred Years War IV

'In its breadth, political acumen and adherence to the art of storytelling, this is History with a capital H . . . What Sumption is producing is a monumental and complete work.' Dan Jones

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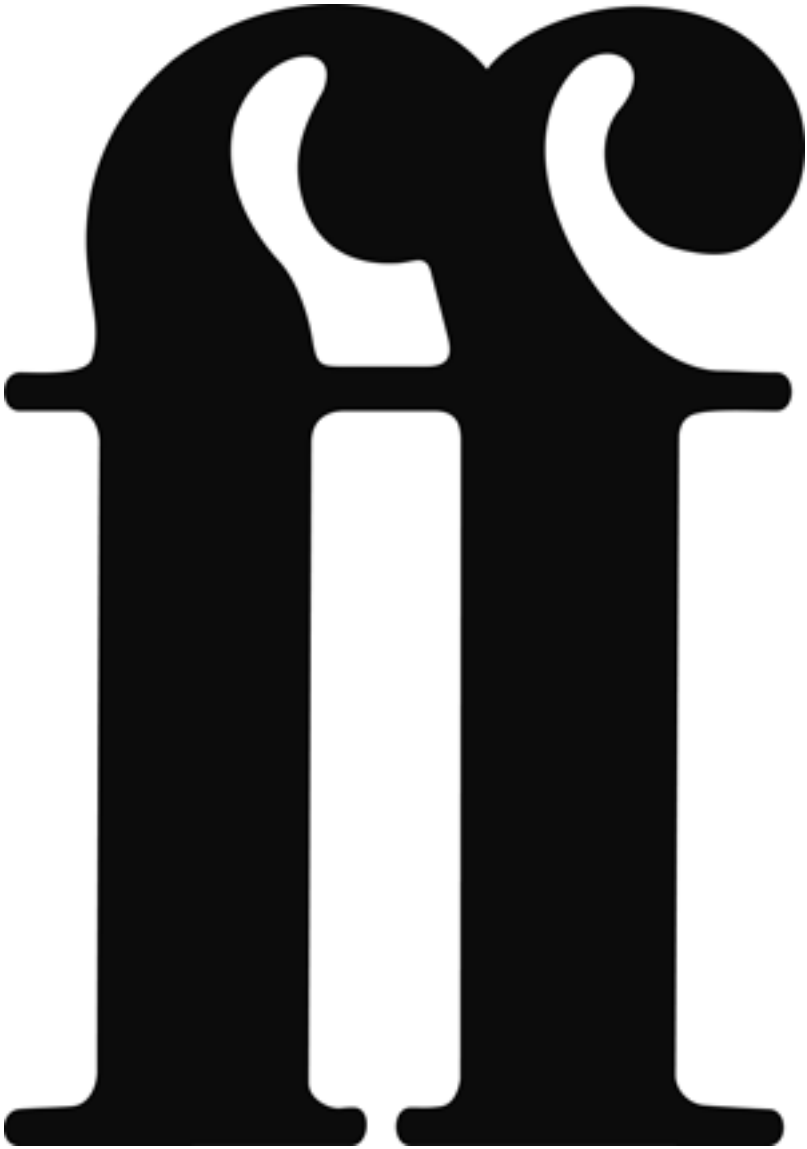

THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR

JONATHAN SUMPTION

VOLUME IV
Cursed Kings

FABER & FABER

To Freddie

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Preface

In the early fifteenth century France, the strongest and most populous nation state of medieval Europe, suffered a complete internal collapse and a partial conquest by a foreign power, something for which there was no precedent in its earlier history, or indeed later until 1940. The history of these years is framed by two political murders. In November 1407 Louis Duke of Orléans, the King's brother and the effective ruler of France, was battered to death in a Paris street by a band of killers hired by his cousin John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy. Twelve years later, in September 1419, John was in turn cut down on the bridge of Montereau in a carefully planned operation authorised by the Dauphin of France and carried out by his closest associates, most of whom had been Louis' protégés in his lifetime. These assassinations unleashed a civil war in France which lasted for a generation and for bitterness and savagery matched the religious wars of the late sixteenth century and the revolutions of 1789 and 1870. The catastrophe put France at the mercy of one of the most remarkable rulers of the medieval period, Henry V of England, who occupied first Normandy and then Paris and much of northern France. English readers have naturally seen Henry's victories through English eyes, but they were in reality a chapter in a French tragedy.

These extraordinary events are overlaid in both France and England by the enduring power of myth. In France they marked the birth of a new patriotism, the point of departure for some of the seminal national myths which continue to influence perceptions of the period to this day. In England later generations would look back on an age of brief but spectacular achievement as the measure of their own rulers' failure. Even now it is difficult to think of England's fifteenth-century history without the arresting imagery of Shakespeare, who transmitted his own idealised account of the period two centuries later to a country still uncertain of its place in the world.

The story is dominated by the life and death of the city of Paris, which attained the highest and lowest points of its medieval history in the period covered by this volume. It was in Paris that the French princes pursued their struggle for power around the inert figure of a witless king. It was in the old Palace, the Louvre, the Hôtel Saint-Pol and the Hôtel de Bourbon that some of the most significant

diplomatic encounters occurred. It was the prisons of the Châtelet and the Conciergerie which witnessed the worst scenes of mass murder in France's medieval history. It was in the streets and lanes of the crowded right-bank quarters and beneath the shadow of the Bastille Saint-Antoine that mob violence determined the fate of governments. And it was in Paris that an English king took control of the institutions of the French state, installing his soldiers in its barracks and his functionaries in its offices, thus fulfilling a dream which his forebears had never dared to take seriously.

The rituals of legitimacy and the outward forms of authority mattered in the middle ages, but few rulers of the period were equal to their great offices. Who were the 'cursed kings' of this volume's subtitle? The saddest of them was undoubtedly the benign but mentally defective Charles VI of France, a mannequin of authority, at once indispensable and useless, whose powers were usurped by those around him for their own purposes. Almost as tragic a figure was his Bavarian queen, Isabelle, driven into politics to defend the interests of her sickly children, but outmanoeuvred by cleverer men – her brother-in-law and supposed lover Louis Duke of Orléans, Louis' murderer John the Fearless, and the rebarbative Gascon dictator Bernard Count of Armagnac. There were others: the inexperienced Dauphin Charles of Ponthieu, the future Charles VII, Isabelle's last surviving son whom she finally renounced and disinherited; that naive romantic Sigismund of Luxembourg King of Germany, a powerless bankrupt with pretensions to reorder the state of Europe; the sometime paladin of European chivalry Henry IV, who had seized the throne of England in a ruthless coup but, weakened by sickness and racked by guilt, found himself only intermittently able to govern; the pathetic child-king James I of Scotland, captured at sea and held for nearly two decades in English prisons to serve as the pawn of his jailers. Even Henry V found himself carried forward by the current of events which he could not control, assuming a burden beyond the resources of his kingdom which none of his successors could sustain. He died of dysentery in a French royal fortress at the age of thirty-six, just two months before he would have become King of France.

Like previous volumes of this history, this is a narrative, within an analytical framework supplied by the great themes of the time: the rising democracy of the streets, the nascent forces of nationalism, the disintegration of traditional forms of authority, the invasion of a great nation by a smaller and poorer but better-organised neighbour. The narrative sources for the period are unusually rich and varied. The shrewd and opinionated Michel Pintoin, cantor of the royal abbey of Saint-Denis and official

historiographer of the monarchy; the Picard nobleman Enguerrand de Monstrelet, who continued Froissart's great chronicle with a high level of accuracy but none of his model's literary verve; the French herald Jean Le Fèvre who watched the battle of Agincourt from the English camp; the anonymous Parisian clergyman who for more than four decades recorded in acerbic tones the life of the city as seen from the streets; the English soldier John Page, probably a humble archer, who wrote the story of the siege of Rouen in doggerel verse with an immediacy matched only by the private letters home that now survive in growing numbers: these men, and others like them, watched events as they unfolded, representing different poles of contemporary experience. I have made extensive use of them and other contemporary writers, but the present narrative is shaped mainly by the abundant records, published and unpublished, of the English and French governments and the rich archives of the Valois Dukes of Burgundy. In this and other respects, the principles on which this volume is written are the same as in previous volumes.

I am often asked how many volumes there will be. The answer is that the next one, which will carry the story to the effective end of the English presence in France in the 1450s, will be the last. Calais remained in English hands for a century after that, and the English kings continued to call themselves kings of France until 1802. A final chapter of that volume will trace this curious afterlife of England's longest and most debilitating war.

This volume is dedicated to my eldest daughter, who was born in 1979, the year that I embarked upon this venture.

J. P. C. S.
Berbiguières
September 2014

CHAPTER I

Paris 1400: A Time of Fortune

On 3 June 1400 the Byzantine Emperor Manuel II Paleologus entered Paris. By the showy standards of contemporary state visits Manuel cut a sorry figure. Accompanied by fewer than sixty of his own attendants, speaking nothing but Greek, mounted on a borrowed white charger and dependent for his travelling expenses on his hosts, he had come to beg for money and troops in the hope of preserving his shrunken domains from the Ottoman Turks. Yet what Manuel lacked in power and wealth he more than made up by the prestige of his crown, a vestigial relic of the last empire to unite all Christendom under a single government. The rulers of France were determined to enjoy the reflected light and to show off the magnificence of their capital. Two thousand prominent citizens lined the road from the fortified bridge of Charenton east of the city by which the Emperor approached. The presidents and judges of the Parlement received him in a body by the roadside, wearing their robes of office and surrounded by 500 attendants. Three French cardinals came forward to meet him, each with his own impressive entourage. The King, Charles VI, then enjoying an interval of lucidity, waited in front of the Porte Saint-Antoine beneath the walls of the Bastille, accompanied by his family and councillors and surrounded by a dense crowd of noblemen and massed trumpeters and bandsmen.

The two monarchs embraced, exchanged a kiss of peace and then rode together at the head of the cavalcade through the city gate, passing the ramparts which Charles V had built four decades before to enclose the rich new suburbs of his expanding capital. Crossing the drawbridge they entered the Rue Saint-Antoine, the broadest thoroughfare of medieval Paris. On their left as they passed along the street stood the rambling buildings, courtyards and gardens of the Hôtel Saint-Pol which had been the home of the French monarchy since the 1360s. A little further on they penetrated the older wall of Philip Augustus, dating from the beginning of the thirteenth century, and then the eleventh-century Porte Baudoyer, where a gateway and a fountain marked the line of a yet earlier wall. At this point the procession was swallowed up by a maze of narrow, irregular streets, lined with tall timber houses whose

projecting upper stories and roof corbels crowded out the sky. The Emperor's route took him along the Rue de la Tixanderie, once the territory of the weavers, now lined by the mansions of the Dukes of Anjou and Berry and the houses of some of the richest merchants and officials of the city. An opening on the left gave onto the Place de Grève, the largest open space in the city. Overlooked by the seat of the municipality, it sloped down to the strand of the Seine with its beached barges and busy cereals market. A little further on the procession passed under the arch of the Grand Châtelet. This austere building had served as the outer gate of Paris at a time when the city covered no more than the Île de la Cité. Stranded by the expanding city, it now housed the grim prison where the royal provost presided over the city's main civil and criminal courts. For Manuel the successive lines of walls, marking the ceaseless expansion of Paris over five centuries, must have made a painful contrast with Constantinople, once a much larger city, whose shrunken population now occupied only a small fraction of the immense area enclosed by its fourth-century walls.

Emerging onto the quays of the Seine the Emperor and his host entered the Grand Pont. The largest bridge of medieval Paris was a narrow thoroughfare lined on both sides with the shops of the goldsmiths and money-changers. It brought the cavalcade across to the Île de la Cité, the Roman kernel of Paris. In the centre of the island lay a densely populated quarter comprising a mass of churches and chapels surrounded by hovels and dark filthy lanes, dominated from the east by the towers of Notre-Dame cathedral and from the west by the high walls and spires of the royal Palace. At the southern end of the bridge stood the square tower of the Palace, built half a century before, whose clock, ringing out the intervals of the day, could be heard all the way across Paris. The vast walled enclosure of the Palace covered the whole of the western part of the Île de la Cité, about a third of the island. It had been the scene of some of the most terrible moments of the revolutions of the 1350s. Charles V, who had witnessed the worst of them, had hated the place and abandoned it at the outset of his reign to judges, lawyers and officials. But it remained, as it always would, one of the principal theatres for the great occasions of the state. The King and the Emperor entered the enclosure beneath the gatehouse opposite the Rue de la Vieille Draperie, one of the most ancient thoroughfares of medieval Paris, today buried beneath the impersonal buildings and windy spaces of the Préfecture de Police and the Tribunal de Commerce. Here the Emperor was entertained at a banquet in the Grand' Salle, the largest hall of western Europe, dominated from the upper walls by the painted statues of the kings

of France from Clovis to Philip the Fair.[1]

With about 200,000 permanent residents and a mass of uncounted vagrants from every other part of France, Paris was by far the most populous city in Europe and almost certainly the richest. Writing in the 1430s in a city looted by the partisans of a bitter civil war, abandoned by the monarchy and the nobility, and occupied by the soldiers and officials of a foreign power, an ageing professional scribe remembered the Emperor's state visit as the high point of the capital's lost greatness. This man needed to remind his readers that Paris had once been the centre of the political world, buzzing with gossip and decked out with the symbols of power; where the kings of France, Navarre and Sicily had spent much of their time; where they had rubbed shoulders with princes, dukes, counts and bishops; where an army of France's finest craftsmen had laboured to feed their appetite for luxury; where Christendom's finest scholars and orators had lived in the rambling buildings of Notre-Dame and the colleges and religious houses of the left bank; where the press of people crossing the Grand Pont had been enough to crush a horse; where the treasuries of the churches were worth a kingdom and the streets offered 'more riches and wonders, more ceremonies and excitement than any one man could recount'. Guillebert de Metz was not alone in looking back on these scenes with nostalgia. Misfortune begets myth. One of those who had waited upon the Byzantine Emperor was the French King's uncle Louis II Duke of Bourbon. Three decades later, when Louis' old standard-bearer came to dictate his memoirs, he too looked back on Manuel's visit as a symbolic moment before the onset of civil war when 'peace and good fortune reigned in France' and the country was at the height of its power and influence. Another elderly memoir-writer of the 1430s, Perceval de Cagny, who had been a squire of the Count of Alençon, remembered it as a time when Parisians slept easy in their beds although no watches were kept from the walls and the city gates were left open day and night. Even as a young man of sixteen Gilles le Bouvier, the future Berry Herald, believed that 'in that hour the noble kingdom of France and the good city of Paris enjoyed power, renown, honour and wealth beyond every other Christian realm'.[2]

These were golden years for France. French troops defended Constantinople against the Turks. In Italy Asti, Genoa and Naples were French cities. A band of Norman adventurers had conquered the Canary Islands in one of the earliest European colonial ventures. Some of the greatest literature in early French was being written: the chronicles of Froissart, the ballads and *rondeaux* of Eustache Deschamps, the poems and polemics of Christine de Pisan and the

exuberant verses of the aristocratic authors of the *Cent Ballades* all of which found patrons, readers and imitators in France and translators abroad. Around the College of Navarre, among the intimates of the royal princes and in the upper reaches of the civil service, a self-conscious literary culture grew up founded on a stylised Latin moulded by classical forms and the rhetoric of the Augustan age of Rome. A generation of outstanding Parisian craftsmen inspired by French, Flemish and Dutch artistic traditions was responsible for some of the most beautiful painted manuscripts of the European middle ages. In Dijon the sculptor Claus Sluter was creating works of emotionally charged realism twenty years before the earliest works of Donatello in Italy. These are the chance survivals of a prolifically creative moment in French history most of whose monuments have perished: the grand Parisian mansions of the royal princes, demolished in the subsequent development of the city; the remarkable creations of the Parisian jewellers whose descriptions fill the inventories of the King and the nobility, almost all of them looted, dismantled or melted down for ready cash in the troubles of the following years; the carved tombs of wealthy prelates and officials, smashed by the revolutionaries of successive generations; the beautiful images in wood and stone which once decorated countless churches proclaiming a new, intense religious sensibility, only to be mutilated by the self-confident puritanism of the sixteenth century or discarded by the refined taste of the eighteenth.

It was above all a Parisian moment. 'Adieu Paris, adieu petits pâtés', sang the poet Eustache Deschamps as he left the capital for Languedoc, listing all the luxuries that he would miss in the austere southern provinces: baths, brothels, soft beds, embroidered fabrics, fancy clothes, dancing and fine wine. There was a good deal more to this than the familiar contrast of urban sophistication and rural simplicity. Paris reached the apogee of its fortunes at a time when the rest of France, like most of Europe, was suffering from a prolonged economic depression. The country had been at peace since the truce of 1389 with England and there had been no major campaign on French soil for six years before that. But brigandage remained a serious issue, especially in the south. It took decades for rural communities to recover from war damage, uprooted vines, lost cattle and draught animals and burned-out buildings, all of which required scarce capital to replace them. The effects were aggravated by a declining rural population as war, internal migration and bubonic plague took their toll on the inhabitants of Europe's richest kingdom. The result was a persistent fall in agricultural yields and prices and a general decline in economic activity. Marginal land

went out of cultivation, returning to forest or scrub. The revenues of the nobility, the Church and the mass of peasant smallholders, all founded on agricultural production, fell away. So did the profits of industrial products like textiles, the staple of the northern towns. In the 1350s and 1360s wage-earners had experienced a brief improvement in their standard of living as labour became scarce and wages rose in the aftermath of the first great plague of 1348. But the impact of this one-off adjustment was exhausted by the 1370s. By the end of the fourteenth century shrinking demand had checked the upward pressure on wages. The long reign of Charles VI (1380–1422) was characterised by stagnation and persistent economic recession.[3]

Between 1398 and 1403 France suffered the last major outbreak of bubonic plague of the late middle ages. It was the most virulent and prolonged epidemic for a generation. Statistical evidence is fragmentary and often hard to interpret. But, such as it is, it suggests that the population may have fallen by as much as a quarter in the space of five years. Judging by the complaints of the tax farmers, whose income depended on the yield of sales taxes, economic activity fell by about a third in the same period as people died or fled and markets were deserted. The immediate effect was most pronounced in the towns, where mortality was highest. But in the longer term it was the countryside that was hit hardest as men abandoned the land and migration to the cities accelerated. When, in January 1406, the royal council considered a new flat-rate tax on towns and villages, the technical experts in the Chambre des Comptes advised that out of an estimated 1,700,000 settlements in France no fewer than 700,000, or more than 40 per cent, would have to be exempted because war damage and plague had left them too poor to pay. The indirect consequences of a declining population proved to be even more persistent: falling demand for manufactures; declining international trade; shrinking credit and a diminishing money supply. All of these things were aggravated by the rise in the value of the silver coinage resulting from the secular decline of European silver production.[4]

France in 1400 remained the varied patchwork of regions which it had always been and would remain until the nineteenth century: a land of many languages, disparate laws and cultures, and intense local patriotisms. Over a period of some three centuries the kings of France had progressively intensified their power over their diverse realm, assisted by the Church, an ambitious civil service and a professional judiciary with a developed sense of royal authority. Philip Augustus had established the main organs of the state permanently in Paris at the end of the twelfth century. Two

centuries later government had become the city's main industry. Its economy was sustained by the service of the king, the noblemen and ecclesiastical princes who attended on him, and the judges, lawyers, officials and courtiers who administered Europe's most intensely bureaucratic state. Philip Augustus, Louis IX, Philip the Fair and his sons, and Charles V had all been pre-eminently Parisian monarchs, living in the city by choice and embellishing it with many of its finest buildings. Charles VI was born and died there, held court there for the first twelve years of his reign and passed most of his remaining twenty years confined there by illness. Paris was the scene of all the theatrical moments of the French monarchy. The king marked his accession with an extravagant *joyeuse entrée*. A frightened populace mounted processions through its streets to claim the intercession of God at times of national peril. More than a hundred bell-towers tolled the great occasions of the political and ecclesiastical calendar. Bonfires and street parties marked the news of victory or peace, the birth of the king's children or his recovery from illness. Laws and proclamations were announced from the steps of the Châtelet and the old Palace and repeated to the sound of trumpets at street crossings. Paris was the scene of the meetings of the Estates-General and all the other elaborately stage-managed assemblies by which the Valois kings sought to associate their subjects with momentous political decisions. Crowds crammed into the small space among the booksellers' shops in front of Notre-Dame cathedral to witness the burning of books and the public statements of a highly politicised ecclesiastical hierarchy. And at the end of every reign the king's body was carried up the Rue Saint-Denis escorted by the liveried officers and household of the dead man and by tens of thousands of mourners.

The city's political role was everywhere visible in its buildings. The courts and halls of the Hôtel Saint-Pol by the Bastille were filled with the domestics of the royal household. Its officers and their staffs occupied every corner of the vast and rambling collection of buildings and spilled out into the houses in the streets around. In his prime Charles VI had employed forty-five chamberlains and some 700 or 800 gentlemen about his court, in addition to a multitude of menials. The secretaries, notaries and clerks of the Chancery, nearly three times as numerous as they had been a century before, were packed into the halls of the Palace and the mansions of successive chancellors. The tower of the Louvre, dominating the urban landscape from the west, its entrance surmounted by a statue of King Charles V, now served as a subsidiary palace, a ceremonial theatre for state occasions and a royal treasury, library and arsenal. The cramped buildings of the Châtelet at the northern end of the

Grand-Pont accommodated a growing staff of judges, examiners, clerks, notaries, sergeants, executioners and jailers. On the Île de la Cité opposite, behind the tall, fortified facade of the Conciergerie, lay the buildings, courts and gardens of the former royal palace, largely rebuilt by Philip the Fair at the beginning of the fourteenth century. The northern part of this administrative quarter, overlooking the right branch of the Seine, housed a growing mass of functionaries in the offices, towers and galleries around the Grand' Salle. These officials staffed the judicial services of the royal household, responsible for dealing with petitions, as well as the various chambers of the Parlement de Paris, the highest court of the land, and a number of political and administrative offices in the royal government. Squeezed into the remaining spaces were the offices and archives of the vast and complex financial services of the Crown: the three Treasurers of France, responsible for the management of the royal domain and the administration of receipts and payments; the councillors and auditors of the Chambre des Comptes and the incipient Cour du Trésor; the Généraux-Conseillers of the royal finances with their ample staffs; the Receivers-General of taxes with their subordinate officials answerable for the collection of the *aides* and the *gabelle du sel.*[5]

The princes and prelates of the realm, by convention the closest advisers of the King and the dominant figures in his council, passed much of their time in the capital close to the centre of affairs, far more than their forebears had done. On the left bank the dukes of Orléans occupied the Hôtel de Navarre by the Porte de Buci in the Rue Saint-André-des-Arts, close to the mansions of the counts of Eu, the dukes of Brittany, the dauphins of Auvergne and half a dozen lesser noblemen as well as some twenty-five prominent bishops and abbots. Wedged between the city wall and the strand of the river opposite the Louvre, on the site presently occupied by the Institut de France, stood the fortified enclosure of the Hôtel de Nesle with its courts, gardens and galleried arcades, which was occupied by the King's uncle John Duke of Berry, one of the six Parisian residences owned by this magnificent prince, in addition to five great houses beyond the walls. The Duke's sumptuously decorated mansion of Bicêtre, south of the walls by the modern Porte d'Italie in what was then a landscape of open fields and vineyards, had been rebuilt to accommodate his treasure-house of books, paintings, tapestries and jewellery, 'the richest and most valuable art collection in the realm' according to a good judge. On the right bank of the Seine a dense cluster of imposing residences around the Louvre was occupied by the leaders of the ancient nobility: the 'rich and pleasant' palace recently rebuilt by the dukes of Bourbon; the old mansion of the

King of Bohemia who had died at Crécy, now used as his principal residence by the Duke of Orléans; the urban mansions of the counts of Alençon, Laval, Saint-Pol, Hainaut, Clermont, Armagnac and La Marche, all of them prominent actors in the civil wars of the following years. Standing apart, a little to the east, the Hôtel de Bourgogne served as the Paris headquarters of Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, the dominant figure in the French royal council and the owner of at least three other mansions in the capital in addition to the Hôtel de Conflans, a magnificent suburban mansion which stood by the bridge of Charenton, surrounded by beautiful gardens. The owners of these urban palaces never passed unnoticed. Their halls and courts were crammed with servants, retainers and petitioners. Their followers wore their liveries, publicly proclaiming their allegiance in the streets. They forced their way through the crowds on horseback, dressed in magnificent velvets and furs, decked with jewels and escorted by uniformed outriders.[6]

The Crown's professional servants, those 'little kingalings' ('*petits royetaux*') mocked by Guillebert de Metz, were almost as noticeable. They grew fat on the fees and exactions of their offices, the largesse of an incapable king and the speculative opportunities offered by a needy government and a fast-living city. The surviving tax rolls suggest that, leaving aside the princes and the ancient nobility who were exempt, most of the richest Parisians were judges and royal officials. Their houses filled the spaces between the aristocratic residences of the left bank. They built magnificent houses for themselves around the edges of the Marais district, close to the King's residence at Saint-Pol in what are now the Rue Vieille du Temple, the Rue des Archives, the Rue des Francs-Bourgeois and the lanes leading off them. Here stood the Hôtel de Clisson, built by the disgraced Constable in the time of his greatness, of which a gatehouse still stands; the mansions which his protégés, those prodigiously successful parvenus Bureau de la Rivière and Jean le Mercier, had occupied before their fall; the Hôtel Barbette, built by a former Treasurer of Charles VI and occupied by the doomed master of his household, Jean de Montaigu: so many monuments to the ambition of a new aristocracy of functionaries and the fragility of fortunes built on the passing chances of royal favour.[7]

In the parishes of Saint-Jacques-la-Boucherie and Sainte-Opportune, north of the Châtelet, and in the crowded streets around the market of Les Halles stood the houses of the bankers, purveyors, merchants and craftsmen who supplied these princely personages and prospered mightily from their free-handed spending. In a single year, 1400, the Duke of Burgundy spent nearly 40,000 *livres* on jewellery. In the following year the Queen spent twice that on gold

cloth, silks, furs, jewellery, embroidery and various kinds of headgear for herself and her daughter. The Duke of Berry filled his many palaces with treasures and curios. The jewelled confections which the royal princes traditionally presented to each other at every new year consumed tens of thousands of *livres*. The few survivals reveal the spirit of the age better than any of the desiccated lists in the accounts and inventories. The celebrated golden horse of Altötting, a finely detailed sculpture in gold and silver encrusted with sapphires, rubies and pearls, showing Charles VI kneeling before the Virgin and Child while his groom holds his horse below, is perhaps the most remarkable single monument of an age of princely largesse. Given by the Queen to her husband in 1404, it survives in a German church because it was pledged within a year to the Duke of Bavaria as security for a loan which was never repaid. Works like these kept the luxury trades of Paris busy and made small fortunes for the workshops and middlemen who supplied them. Guillebert de Metz gives us the names of Guillaume Sanguin and a Lucchese banker, Dino Rapondi, factors of the dukes of Burgundy, and Simon and Bureau de Dammartin, purveyors to the Queen and the house of Orléans. Other members of the elite of bourgeois Paris performed the same functions for the dukes of Berry, Anjou, Alençon and Armagnac. Some of these purveyors lived lives almost as opulent as the princes whom they served. They patronised poets, painters, musicians, cooks. Their chapels were decorated with stained glass and gold vessels, and famous clerics preached in them. Their houses were filled with good linen, their tables laid with fine plate and excellent food, their beds dressed with thick furs. ‘These are things’, wrote the comfortable citizen known as the Menagier de Paris to his young wife, ‘that make a man want to come home and see his wife and shut the door against the outside world.’[8]

The immense population of Paris was conventionally regarded as a source of strength. ‘The more populous our capital,’ Charles VI proclaimed in 1392, ‘the more its renown will contribute to our glory, our majesty and our sovereignty.’ In times of peace and prosperity this was no doubt true. But the French capital’s dense mass of humanity also made it vulnerable to internal and external enemies, a factor of growing importance in the coming time of political instability and civil war. Contrasts of wealth and poverty, extreme even by the standards of the age, were a long-standing source of unrest and disorder. Paris was an economy of small workshops, artisans and shopkeepers. The complex regulation of the retail trades, combined with high costs of transport and distribution, made it an exceptionally expensive city to live in. The

comparatively rigid and regulated labour market offered good wages for the minority with secure jobs or indispensable skills, but volatile rates of pay and high levels of unemployment for the floating mass of journeymen and labourers. The situation was aggravated by the tide of migrants fleeing to the city from the poverty and insecurity of the countryside. Those with skills came up against the formidable barriers with which established tradesmen guarded their privileges and monopolies against interlopers: residence qualifications, tight limits on the number of masters, minimum periods of apprenticeship, intrusive controls on quality. The majority of migrants with no skills, or none of real value, scrambled for jobs at subsistence wages or worse. The more fortunate of these wretches found work as domestic servants or as casuals in the building or carrying trades, and accommodation in the attic rooms which the tradesmen of Paris traditionally assigned to their menials or let out to 'poor labourers'. But many ended up as vagrants, beggars, petty criminals or prostitutes. They passed their time by day in the estimated 4,000 taverns and drinking houses of the city. They slept rough at night in cellars or suburbs, or dossed down on the barges moored in the Seine. Guillebert of Metz's reckoning of 80,000 beggars was certainly exaggerated but it reflected a widespread perception that the city was overrun by them. In the course of Charles VI's long reign these problems generated mounting resentment among the poor and young.[9]

In this intensely political city collective grievances rapidly transmuted into political movements even among those who were neither poor nor young. Paris had had no formal municipal government since 1383 when in the aftermath of the revolt of the *Maillotins* the city corporation had been suppressed. The Provost of the Merchants, who was for practical purposes the city's mayor, was transformed into a nominated royal official. Most of the other municipal institutions were abolished. But the inhabitants had spontaneously developed other forms of organisation which were less susceptible of government control. Powerful interest groups dominated the social life of the city. The old oligarchy of major families, mostly drawn from the victualling trades, retained much of their political influence. Associations of residents were organised in parishes and districts (*quartiers*) for tax purposes and in bands of ten and fifty for defence and internal security. More than a hundred craft and trade guilds operated as the chief instruments of economic regulation. Countless religious confraternities, charitable associations and local groups brought men together for mutual support. All of these organisations had played an overtly political role in the upheavals of the fourteenth century. The clampdown of

1383 had deprived them of their autonomy and of many of their functions. The more powerful of them had been placed under the supervision of royal officials. But these constraints had never been wholly effective and had been progressively relaxed since the King had taken over the reins of power in 1389. By the beginning of the fifteenth century the old networks of power, though still unacknowledged, had recovered much of their former influence over the streets.[10]

Within a few years the growing power and volatile temper of the Parisian guilds would come to be associated with the most powerful and dangerous of them all, the corporation of the Grande Boucherie. This guild controlled the largest of the Parisian butcheries, occupying a maze of covered alleys west of the Châtelet, beneath the shadow of the church tower of St-Jacques-la-Boucherie. They were closely allied to the butchers of Sainte-Geneviève, the largest butchery of the left bank. The richer town-dwellers of late medieval Europe ate prodigious quantities of meat. A plausible contemporary estimate put the numbers sold in the markets of Paris in the early fifteenth century at 4,000 carcasses of mutton, 240 of beef, 500 of veal and 600 of pork every week. The butchers were a self-contained hereditary clan, much intermarried, who had been dominated for generations by a handful of families, such as the Legoix, the Saint-Yons and the Thiberts. The butchers' guilds had recovered their corporate autonomy earlier than any other trade guilds. But their members were not much esteemed. They were 'men of low estate, inhuman, detestable and devoted to their dishonourable trade', according to the patrician Jean Jouvenel des Ursins. In spite of their low social status the butchers were rich, enjoying the benefits of a tightly controlled monopoly and a growing market for their product. With wealth came ambition. Their leaders coveted status and power. They relished their position as kingmakers, once the rivalries of the princely houses spilled out onto the streets. Concentrated in the narrow lanes of their quarters, they could summon up mobs in minutes, calling on hundreds of muscular apprentices and journeymen as well as on their allies in the minor butcheries, the stallholders of Les Halles and the pervasive network of associated trades such as the tanners, skinners, leather-dressers and cobblers.[11]

By the standard of medieval cities Paris was well policed. But no police force could have hoped to control such a dense concentration of humanity with the limited means available to public authorities at the time. The Provost, a royal official, was the principal judicial and administrative officer of the capital. He disposed of a force of sergeants attached to the criminal court at the Châtelet. Its strength

had progressively increased since its creation in the thirteenth century and currently stood at 440 men. Half of this force, all unmounted, were charged with patrolling the area within the walls and the inner suburbs. Their efforts were supplemented by the sergeants employed by the various churches exercising criminal jurisdiction in the city, and at night by the watch, a militia drawn from the richer householders. In reality these arrangements were less impressive than they seemed. The sergeants of the Châtelet were undisciplined, corrupt and widely hated. Watch-duty was negligently performed and often evaded. Much of the city's population was mobile and anonymous. There were always many strangers. In these conditions, the mechanisms of social control and mutual surveillance by which medieval communities maintained public order were largely ineffective. The physical fabric of the city added to the difficulties. The lanes in which most people lived were dark and narrow. Side streets could be closed off by wooden gates installed at their extremities. Main thoroughfares could be blocked at will by heavy chains attached to iron rings fixed to the buildings and kept in readiness at street crossings. The streets were extraordinarily sensitive to rumour, provoking fear, fury, hatred or panic, what Balzac would one day call the 'word-of-mouth broadsheets' of Paris. Out of sight of the august residents of the left bank, the Louvre quarter and the Marais, grievances magnified among the tightly packed population of the alley tenements. Tempers frayed in the hot, crowded attics and stinking cellars. Mobs gathered in seconds in the few open spaces within the walls: Les Halles, the Porte Baudoyer, the Place de Grève, the Rue Saint-Antoine and, on the left bank, the Place Maubert.[12]

Fear of revolution in their capital had been an abiding anxiety of the kings of France for many years. Twice in the last half-century, in 1357 and in 1382, the Paris mob had taken possession of the streets and acquired control of the city in alliance with important factions of the civic oligarchy. The King's ministers did not forget. Along the Seine stood the successive monuments in dressed stone to their historic distrust of the citizens of Paris. In the heart of the capital the main gate of the Châtelet was refortified by the officers of Charles V and a keep constructed in the middle of the enclosure, dominating the butchers' quarter and the open spaces of the Innocents and Les Halles beyond. Opposite, on the left bank, a smaller urban fortress known as the Petit Châtelet was built at the south end of the Petit Pont to allow the authorities to seal off the riotous students of the university quarter from the rest of the city. When in the 1360s the city's walls were rebuilt to contain the expanding suburbs of the right bank, the Louvre lay well within the

new line of defence, but it was rebuilt and enlarged and defended by a turreted curtain wall along the strand of the Seine to serve as a refuge from the violence of the Parisians. Rising above the forest beyond the eastern edge of city stood the new royal keep of Vincennes, completed at prodigious cost to serve as the core of a new official city in time of disorder. All of these strongholds had been garrisoned and used during the revolt of the *Maillotins* in 1382. In the following year, after the rising had been suppressed, the Bastille Saint-Antoine, the fortress-gate on the east, was redesigned to resist attack from inside the city and to provide royal forces with a means of forcing an entry into the capital from outside 'even against its inhabitants' will'.[13]

Paris was powerfully defended against external attack. The right-bank quarters were protected by five miles of modern walls and ditches, pierced by seven heavily fortified gates. The left bank was weaker. Its ancient walls, dating from the reign of Philip Augustus more than two centuries earlier, were pierced by eight gates. Some of them were in poor repair and gave onto extensive suburbs which provided ample cover for an enemy. But a close siege would have required an army far larger than any state of the late middle ages could have raised, as the English had discovered when they tried to invest the city in 1346 and again in 1359 and 1372. No close blockade of Paris was even attempted before the end of the sixteenth century. The main threats in wartime were starvation and betrayal from within. Paris stands at the nodal point of the river system of northern France, between the confluences of the Seine with the Oise on the west and with the Marne and the Yonne on the east. In the fifteenth century its dense population depended for its supplies on an immense network of road and river links extending hundreds of miles across some of the most fertile regions of western Europe. The bulk of its grain came from the plains of Picardy and the Beauce and the basin of the Marne. Meat came from Normandy and Perche, wine from Burgundy, salt and fish from the Atlantic seaboard. Fuel, mainly firewood, was brought in from the forests of the Île de France. Shortage of storage space and working capital meant that stocks of these staples were generally low and quickly exhausted. A tidal wave of carts, barges and porters brought in goods daily in prodigious quantities. It was a delicate physical and economic balance, easily disrupted in time of war. Bands of soldiers could terrorise the roads, reducing the traffic to a trickle, provoking panic in the streets of the capital and raising prices in its markets to astronomical levels. Small forces of men could cut off supplies by taking possession of the pinch-points outside the walls. The most important of these were the two powerfully fortified suburban

bridges at Saint-Cloud on the west and Charenton on the east. Just beyond the northern suburbs the small walled town of Saint-Denis stood across the Amiens road. Beyond the horizon a ring of strategically sited fortresses, arranged like a noose around the capital, could choke off the road and river traffic of whole provinces. Étampes blocked the Orléans road to the south. The island fortress of Melun closed the corridor of the Seine. The castle of Montereau guarded the important bridges at the confluence of the Seine and the Yonne and controlled most of the traffic of Burgundy. The valley of the Marne and its tributaries, which carried the trade of Champagne and the provinces of the Moselle and the Rhine, could be closed off at will by hostile garrisons based at Meaux or La Ferté-sous-Jouarre. West of the city troops based at Pontoise on the Oise and Mantes on the Seine could stop supplies from the rich and productive regions of the Beauce, Normandy and Picardy. The small walled town of Senlis, thirty miles north of Paris, stood over the principal crossroads of the northern French plain. All of these places were destined to play critical roles in the invasions and civil wars of the next generation.

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The crisis of the French state, which came close to destroying it over the next thirty years, had its origin in one of its most remarkable achievements. Alone among the major states of late medieval Europe France had a tax administration capable of appropriating much of the surplus wealth generated by France's economy to the needs of the Crown without any formal process of consent on behalf of taxpayers. The system dated from the 1360s when a number of financial reforms had been introduced in order to pay the ransom of Charles VI's grandfather John II and to suppress the Great Companies which were then operating under English patronage throughout the country. It was founded on the two principal indirect taxes of the French *ancien régime*: the *aides*, a sales tax levied at 5 per cent on most commodities exposed for sale and at 8.3 per cent on wine; and the *gabelle*, an excise on salt, generally levied at a rate of 10 per cent. During the reign of Charles V (1364–80) these impositions had depended, at least in theory, on the consent of various regional assemblies representing taxpayers. But when, in the crisis which followed Charles V's death in 1380, it proved impossible to obtain consent to their continuance, the government imposed them by decree and brutally suppressed attempts at concerted opposition. From 1384 the *aides* and the *gabelle* were supplemented by a new tax, the *taille*. *Tailles* were direct taxes imposed on local communities at unpredictable

intervals in order to meet financial emergencies, generally connected with war. There was never any pretence of consent to the *taille*. Between them the *aides* and the *gabelle* raised about two million *livres* in the average year in addition to the revenues of the royal demesne and the yield of the 'tenths' levied on the Church. In the first five years of its existence, between 1384 and 1389, the *taille* added on average another million *livres* annually. This represented a heavier burden of taxation than any other European state had been able to impose, both in absolute terms and relative to the country's wealth and population. The war with England provided the political justification for taxation on this scale and the main reason why, in spite of significant discontent and some localised outbreaks of rebellion, it was tolerated by much of the population. But when the war was suspended in 1389 and war expenditure fell to its lowest levels for half a century the *aides* and the *gabelle* continued, albeit at a reduced rate. The *taille* was initially abandoned but then revived in 1396 and again in 1397. This implied a substantial structural surplus of government revenues over the ordinary demands of peacetime government. Yet from about 1399 onward the treasury was insolvent. The King's receivers and treasurers were meeting his liabilities with bills of assignment payable three years ahead, many of which were dishonoured when the time came.[14]

How had this come about? The main reason was that government's revenues were being appropriated on a large scale by the royal princes and their clients, and by the higher reaches of the civil service. In the first two decades of the fifteenth century the situation deteriorated as a bitter struggle for control of the Crown's resources was fought out in the council chambers of the royal palaces, in the national and regional assemblies, among the consuls and magistrates of the towns and ultimately on the streets. The essential problem was the incapacity of the King. Charles VI had never had his father's intelligence or strength of purpose, even in his brief prime at the end of the 1380s. But in August 1392, while riding at the head of his army into Brittany, he suffered the first serious manifestation of a life-long illness which, so far as we can judge across an interval of more than six centuries, appears to have been a form of paranoid schizophrenia. For the next thirty years of his long reign the French King lived a life of intermittent sanity, interrupted by ever longer and more frequent 'absences', the delicate euphemism used by contemporaries to describe the periods when the King would wander through the corridors of his palaces howling and screaming, tearing and soiling his clothes, breaking the furniture or throwing it on the fire, not knowing who or what he

was and unable to recognise his closest friends and kinsmen or even his wife. In his intervals of lucidity Charles was capable of picking up traces of his previous political positions. He was gracious and could be articulate, even forceful. He acted out his role. He retained the loyalty and affection of his subjects. But he was no longer capable of governing his realm. Politically he was a spent force, content to allow the factions around him to fight their battles over his head as if he were no more than a distant spectator. The situation was too uncertain to warrant a formal regency, which might have provided a measure of continuity and conserved the strength of the Valois monarchy. So while the King lived everything had to be done in his name. Major decisions were deferred until he recovered his faculties. If a decision could not be put off it was taken in his absence but invariably submitted to him later for his confirmation. Charles was at once indispensable and useless. The day-to-day business of government devolved upon the royal council, a protean body comprising the royal princes, the officers of state, a number of bishops active in the work of government, and a shifting cast of prominent magnates and courtiers. The council became the forum for the rivalries and jealousies of faction as power was uneasily contested between the King's closest relatives, supported by cliques with no real legitimacy in law or security in fact.

In the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the English deposed three kings who were thought to be incapable of governing, one of them twice. Yet the French never contemplated such a thing, even at the lowest ebb of Charles VI's fortunes. After three centuries in which the power of the Crown had progressively increased, France had come to identify itself more than any other European society with its monarchy. So far as its ancient and disparate provinces had a sense of common identity, it was the monarchy which had created it. So far as it enjoyed effective government, internal peace and security from its enemies, it owed these things mainly to the monarchy. Almost all of its national myths and symbols were centred upon the monarchy. At the end of the fourteenth century the Provençal jurist Honoré Bonet contrasted the cohesion of his adoptive country with the divided societies all around it. France was 'the column of Christendom, of nobility and virtue, of well-being, riches and faith', but, he added, 'above all else she has a powerful King'. The kings of France were supported by an impressive corps of professional councillors, judges and administrators. But the functioning of the state was never wholly impersonal. It remained critically dependent upon the personality of the monarch. The king was not only a ceremonial figure, a symbol of power, the fount of justice, the source of all secular authority. His

was the only authority which could resolve the inevitable political differences among his councillors and ministers. Only he could confer legitimacy on controversial decisions of the state: the making of peace and war, the resolution of the prolonged schism of the Church, major dispositions of the royal demesne, the imposition of *tailles* or the marriage of his children. Above all the king was the indispensable arbiter in the continual contest for royal favour and largesse among the princes and the top officials and churchmen, the jobbery that served as the grease of every European state until the nineteenth century. If the king could not perform this function himself it was likely to be taken out of his hands by self-interested groups intent on satisfying their own claims and excluding competitors. The traditional analogy between the state and the human body, which likened the king to the head and mind of the body politic, was more than an arresting metaphor. As Bonet had attributed the prosperity of France in the 1390s to the strength of the Crown, so the next generation of moralists would blame its weakness for social disintegration and civil war that they saw all around them. 'All is now corrupted, all bent on evil work,' sang Eustache Deschamps, the poet of a deserted court and a dispirited aristocracy; 'these are the symptoms of monarchy's decay.'[15]

The decline of the Crown and the dispersal of power to the nobility and the civil service would have been plain to anyone who wandered among the courts and gardens of the Hôtel Saint-Pol. The King's business was still carried on there. But the crowds of provincial officials, ambassadors, petitioners, tradesmen and merrymakers, the display and extravagance, the music, laughter and feasting of the King's youth had all faded away. Charles himself lived surrounded by a meagre court, accompanied by a dwindling band of loyal retainers and servants of low status. One of these wrote in 1406 a pathetic, perhaps exaggerated account of a King, shuffling unshod though his private apartments, without robes to wear in public, horses to ride out with, or even candles to light his bedroom, his manners mocked and patronised, his authority ignored or manipulated by his former courtiers. The great came before him in search of favours at the first sign of recovery, bustling his loyal attendants out of the way and then turned their backs as soon as he relapsed. When the King was 'absent' the greedy, the needy and the ambitious looked for opportunities elsewhere, in the halls of the princely mansions of the capital and the anterooms of prominent bureaucrats. In the two decades which followed the onset of the King's illness, the Duke of Berry's daily household expenditure rose threefold, and the daily consumption of meat substantially exceeded the royal court's. According to the house biographer of the Duke of

Bourbon, those who still called at the Hôtel Saint-Pol found no one to receive them and promptly left. ‘Let us go and dine at the mansion of the Duke of Bourbon,’ they would say; ‘we are sure to find a good welcome there.’[16]

In November 1388, after eight years in which the kingdom had been run in their own interest by the King’s uncles, Charles VI had ousted them with the assistance of the Constable, Olivier de Clisson, and a group of prominent administrators and former servants of Charles V known to history as the ‘Marmousets’. The Marmouset ministers were comparatively honest. They hacked away at the luxuriant undergrowth of jobbery which had led to an exponential growth in the royal payroll over the previous decade. They reinforced the powers of the auditors and councillors of the Chambre des Comptes. They radically reduced the flow of funds into the pockets of the royal princes and instituted tight controls over fresh grants. They had a strong sense of public service and were no more than moderately venal themselves. But the Marmouset experiment was cut short by the King’s first attack of insanity. In the autumn of 1392 the two surviving brothers of the previous King, the Dukes of Berry and Burgundy, recovered power. The Marmousets were dismissed, Olivier de Clisson disgraced and most of their reforms were swept away along with their authors.

During the last decade of the fourteenth century the dominant figure in the French state was Philip the Bold, Duke of Burgundy. Philip owed his position in the counsels of the government to a number of factors: his high rank, his force of personality, his long experience of government and politics, his considerable political talents and capacity for hard work. He was shrewd and wise. His diplomatic skills were envied even by his enemies. ‘A man of much experience of government, more cautious and eloquent than the other royal princes’, wrote the official historian of the reign. *‘Prince de grant scavoir, grant travail et grant volonté’*, echoed Christine de Pisan. Above all, however, Philip owed his influence to his immense territorial power. Although he was the youngest of John II’s sons, he had been the favourite of both his father and his brother Charles V. His father had endowed him with the duchy of Burgundy after the extinction of the line which had ruled it since the eleventh century. His brother had procured for him the hand of Margaret of Flanders, the greatest heiress in Europe. On the death of her father in 1384 Philip and Margaret inherited the French counties of Flanders and Artois and the towns of Antwerp and Mechelen, the richest commercial and industrial region of northern Europe. They also succeeded to the county of Nevers, bordering on Burgundy to the west, and the Imperial county of Burgundy on the east side of the

Saône, an accession of territory which together with the Charolais (acquired later by purchase) more than doubled their holdings in one of France's richest agricultural regions. In the last decade before Philip's death in 1404 these two substantial blocks of territory, together with the small county of Rethel in the Ardennes, generated on average about 330,000 *livres* a year in domain revenues, taxes and miscellaneous receipts in normal years, rising to more than 600,000 *livres* in wartime.[17] By a deft mixture of diplomacy, inheritance, purchase and political pressure, Philip had built upon these territories, expanding his interests into the jigsaw of autonomous territories lying east and north of Flanders which nominally belonged to the Holy Roman Empire. Brabant, Luxembourg, Hainaut, Holland, Zeeland and Limburg and the ecclesiastical territories of Tournai, Cambrai and Liège formed a continuous arc of territory beyond the northern frontier of France all of which would be brought under Burgundian control in the first half of the fifteenth century.

By the time of his death in 1404 Philip was more than a cadet of the French royal family. Alone among the royal princes of France he had been able to endow his territories with the trappings of a state, straddling the border between France and Germany. He maintained a large and efficient bureaucracy based in the twin capitals of Dijon and Lille. He collected his own taxes. He minted coins. He held a magnificent court, distributing largesse with an open hand. He nominated bishops. He sponsored crusades. He conducted his own relations with the papacy and foreign powers through his own ambassadors. He called armies and fleets into being, commanded by his own marshals and admirals and supported by impressive forces of artillery.

None of this would have been possible without Philip's firm grip on the government of France. He ruthlessly exploited his position at the heart of Charles VI's counsels to serve the interests of his nascent state. French foreign policy was adapted to serve the interests of the ruler of Flanders, which diverged in many ways from those of the rest of France. The Duke's obligations to the Crown were waived or released. His protégés were installed throughout the royal service. But by far the most significant advantage which Philip derived from his position in France was financial. With the complaisance of the King's councillors and officials he was able to direct large transfers of funds from the French royal treasury into his own coffers. The cost of buying prestige, influence and loyalty was high and, like most great noblemen of the late middle ages with pretensions to power, Philip outspent his own resources. The deficiency was funded mainly by

grants and pensions from the Crown and by royal taxes levied in his French domains which were ceded to him either wholly or in part. The rhythm of these payments was directly dependent on the Duke's political fortunes. Among his first acts on recovering control of the government in 1392 was to award himself an annual pension of 36,000 *livres*. This sum was progressively increased over the years and had attained 100,000 *livres* a year by the time of his death twelve years later. In addition Philip received between 60,000 and 80,000 *livres* a year from the proceeds of royal taxes in his domains and 'extraordinary' grants varying from 3,000 *livres* in the later years of the Marmouset regime to no less than 154,000 *livres* in 1403. In the last ten years of his life Philip's total receipts from all sources averaged between 500,000 and 550,000 *livres* a year, of which at least a third and in some years nearly half came from the resources of the French Crown. These figures suggest that the Duke of Burgundy was siphoning off more than a tenth of the estimated annual revenues of the King of France.[18]

Philip of Burgundy was by no means alone in his plundering of the French state. John Duke of Berry, the senior of the King's uncles, had neither the talent nor the ambition of his younger brother. Yet his receipts were not far short of Philip's. John was a great builder. His palatial castle at Mehun-sur-Yèvre, whose high turrets and elaborately carved windows appear in the calendar of the Duke's most famous painted manuscript, was one of seventeen castles and palaces which he built for himself during his long life. John loved luxury. He kept a magnificent court and lavished money on retainers. No fewer than twenty-nine chamberlains adorned his household. His military retinue included a Constable of France and some of the leading noblemen of the realm. They were well paid for their service. 'My lord likes to see his followers grow rich,' his private secretary answered when the agents of the Marmouset ministers accused him of corruption. The Duke of Berry's surviving accounts show an annual expenditure of about 330,000 *livres* in the early fifteenth century, only a modest proportion of which was covered by the revenues of his appanage. Part of the deficiency was met by a pension from the royal treasury of 36,000 *livres* a year, part of it by periodic royal grants of land and money and part of it by borrowing. But even with these resources the Duke had only ever been able to make ends meet by drawing on the considerable revenues of Languedoc, the vast southern province of which he had been royal Lieutenant for most of the 1380s. Jean de Berry was entirely unsuited for this demanding office and had been removed from it in 1389 by the government of the Marmousets. Nevertheless in May 1401 he was reinstated, at first temporarily and then for life.

The appointment was in reality a financial transaction designed to augment the revenues of the heavily indebted Duke. In return for an annual payment of 60,000 *livres* a year to the royal treasury the Duke was granted, on top of his pension, the receipts of the *aides* and the *gabelle* in Languedoc, which were worth twice that much. He was also allowed to retain all royal taxes collected in his personal appanage instead of the half which had previously been allowed to him. A few years later these sources were contributing about 190,000 *livres* a year in cash to his coffers. The duties of his office were not expected to be onerous. They were performed for him by royal officials while the Duke passed his time in Paris and in the palaces which he had built for himself in Berry and Auvergne.[19]

Charles VI's German queen, the Wittelsbach Princess Isabelle of Bavaria, had married Charles VI at the age of fifteen after a hurriedly arranged deal whose main object was to serve the diplomatic interests of the Duke of Burgundy. History has been unkind to Isabelle. The main count in the indictment against her has always been that she supported the English against her son, the future Charles VII, after the crisis of 1419. She has also been accused, without any real historical basis, of cynicism, corruption and sexual depravity. The fact that she was German blackened her in the eyes of generations of French historians living in the age of the Franco-German wars of modern times. But her critics exaggerated her power as well as her vices. Isabelle had arrived in France as a teenager speaking not a word of French. She was still only twenty-two when her husband's illness first struck. The King's 'absences' were particularly distressing for her. He could not remember who she was. He refused to receive her and from time to time physically attacked her. He took to defacing her arms in the windows of the palace and her emblem engraved on the silver served at their table. Rumour had it that he made humiliating advances to his sister-in-law, Valentine Visconti Duchess of Orléans. Isabelle was an outsider at the French court. Squat and plain according to French ideas of female beauty and excessively fond of money, she was never popular in the streets and little loved in the halls of the princes. But she could not be relegated to the margins. She had considerable influence over the King during his intervals of lucidity. She was the mother of nine surviving children born between 1389 and 1407 on whom the future of the dynasty depended. She was determined and cunning. Forced to fend for herself among the jealous cabals of the Hôtel Saint-Pol, Isabelle became a force to be reckoned with. And as her influence grew so did her demands on her husband's resources. When it became clear that Charles would not be permanently cured, indeed might not

even survive, she had been given her own household and council. They were eventually installed in the Hôtel Barbette, an imposing mansion beneath the old walls of Philip Augustus a short distance north of the Hôtel St-Pol. She was granted an allowance from the treasury for her children and control of her own dower. She received frequent and increasingly generous grants of money, jewellery and land. By 1406 her income had risen to over 140,000 *livres* a year, a fourfold increase in twelve years. Isabelle forged a close bond with her elder brother, Louis of Bavaria, an astute and covetous professional courtier, paladin and ladies' man who made frequent visits to France and settled there in the early years of the fifteenth century. For nearly twenty years Louis served as Isabelle's political adviser and her eyes and ears at court, supporting himself on the largesse of the King, the Queen and the young Dauphin. A rich marriage came his way together with barrels of jewellery, large gifts of money, and pensions and stipends estimated at about 30,000 francs a year.[20]

'The dukes took everything,' complained the lawyer Jean Jouvenel des Ursins, 'and distributed it among their followers as they thought fit.' 'Everything' was an exaggeration but the true facts were serious enough. At the beginning of the fifteenth century the King's two paternal uncles between them directly controlled about two-thirds of the territory of France and were appropriating something like a quarter of the revenues of the Crown. Yet theirs were very far from being the only demands on the King's coffers. Three other royal appanagists, the Dukes of Orléans, Anjou and Bourbon, also enjoyed extensive rights over the proceeds of royal taxes in their domains and received periodic pensions and gifts. A host of lesser noblemen had their own smaller claims. Each of these men had clients, protégés and supporters in their own regions who expected grants and favours. A river of pensions, gifts and pay-rises flowed into the purses of their allies and supporters in the higher reaches of the civil service.[21]

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By far the most disruptive of these predators, because he had the largest ambitions, was the King's brother, Louis Duke of Orléans. Louis was twenty-eight years old in 1400, two years younger than the King. Orphaned as small children, the two brothers had been brought up together under the distant tutelage of their uncles. For eight years, until Charles's emancipation in 1388, they had suffered the same frustrating combination of high status and practical impotence. The experience created a lifelong bond between them which survived through all the King's vicissitudes and gave Louis of

Orléans a large measure of influence during the King's periods of lucidity. Like his brother, Louis was extrovert, self-indulgent and extravagant. But Louis could never enjoy the respect or the discretion which shielded the King's excesses. He was widely regarded as vicious: dissolute and unstable, addicted to gambling and womanising, surrounding himself with wild friends and throwing debauched parties. His obsessive interest in sorcery and the black arts was an open secret. These things overshadowed his undoubted abilities. For Louis was a politician of exceptional ability, charming and gracious, politically astute, highly intelligent and articulate in council, with an outstanding memory and intense powers of concentration.[22]

As the King's closest male relative the Duke of Orléans was by convention the first man in the kingdom after the King himself and nominally the senior member of his council. If Charles VI had died while his children were still minors Louis would have become Regent. Yet for years Louis had lived under the shadow of his uncles. When in September 1392 a great council met in Paris to consider the government of France in the aftermath of the King's first attack of insanity, Louis' bid for power was brushed aside. This was due at least in part to his youth and unsavoury reputation, which compared poorly with the experience and gravitas of the Duke of Burgundy. But it was also due in large measure to the poverty of the young prince's endowment, a serious disability in a society in which land and riches were the main source of status and political power. As a cadet of the royal house Louis had been expected to make his fortune in Italy. His marriage in 1389 to Valentine Visconti, the daughter of the despot of Milan, had brought him the county of Asti in Lombardy and the prospect of great conquests in the peninsula in alliance with his powerful and aggressive father-in-law. This prospect was dashed by the progressive estrangement of France and Milan during the 1390s. As a result Louis' fortune in these early years never matched his ambitions. His assets in France originally amounted to little more than the counties of Valois and Beaumont in the Oise valley north-west of Paris, subject to the rights of the elderly royal dowager who currently occupied them for life; the duchy of Touraine, a modest appanage whose revenues barely covered the cost of its administration and which had been granted to him on terms that it was all that he could expect to receive; and the dowry of his wife comprising the county of Vertus in Champagne and 450,000 florins in cash. During the government of the Marmousets, Louis was able to fund his exuberant style of life by borrowing and periodic hand-outs from his brother. But it was a painful reminder of his

dependence, especially when compared with the splendid state of his uncles with their rich appanages, their pompous entourages and their tendency to patronise the younger princes about them.[23]

In the course of the 1390s Louis of Orléans single-mindedly set about expanding his landed demesne. Early in 1392 he acquired the county of Blois for 200,000 francs. Then in June he exchanged Touraine for the larger and more prestigious duchy of Orléans, one of the King's last acts of largesse before the onset of his illness. At the same time he was promised land worth up to 4,000 francs a year from confiscations and forfeitures. This promise was satisfied over the next few months by the grant of valuable territories in Normandy and by the transfer of the county of Angoulême. The county of Valois finally came into his hands in 1393. Over the following years Louis embarked on an energetic programme of acquisitions in Champagne, buying up lordships from heavily indebted noblemen struggling to make ends meet in the worst agricultural crisis in memory. These purchases were funded partly with cash from his wife's dowry and partly with grants made by the King before the onset of his illness. They were his last significant acquisitions for several years. The tight control exercised in Paris by the Dukes of Burgundy and Berry more or less stopped the flow of fresh royal grants to their ambitious nephew after they recovered power in 1392. Indeed Louis may not even have received the comparatively modest pension from the Crown that was his due, for in 1399 he claimed to be owed no less than 300,000 in arrears.[24]

In 1398 Louis of Orléans began to play a more aggressive political role. The occasion was a trial of strength in the royal council on the intractable question of the papal schism. Philip of Burgundy's views on the schism were moulded by a characteristic mixture of personal conviction and political self-interest. France had supported the cause of the Avignon popes from the outset. But most of Philip's Flemish subjects acknowledged the rival Pope reigning in Rome. Ever since the election of Benedict XIII to the papal throne of Avignon in 1394 Philip, with the support of his brother Jean de Berry, had espoused the policy known as the *voie de cession*, which envisaged the resignation of both rivals so that a third could be elected to preside over all Christendom. The Duke of Orléans for his part stuck to the traditional French policy of unconditional support for Avignon. He did this partly out of sheer contrarianism, but also because he still hankered after the old French project of extruding the Roman Pope by force and creating a principality for himself in central Italy. The King in his moments of sanity seems to have been inclined to support his brother. In March 1398 Charles VI travelled with the Dukes of Berry and Bourbon to Reims to meet the German

Emperor Wenceslas of Bohemia, who was the chief supporter of the Roman Pope among the princes of Europe. The idea was to devise a common front in favour of the *voie de cession*. It came to nothing. The sessions were delayed by the periodic drunkenness of Wenceslas, then interrupted by Charles's sudden relapse into insanity and finally hijacked by the Duke of Orléans. Louis entered into a personal alliance with Wenceslas and used his new-found influence over the German King to sabotage plans for a joint commitment to the *voie de cession.* The King's uncles determined to go ahead alone. In July 1400, while Charles VI was 'absent' behind the closed doors of his apartments in the Hôtel Saint-Pol, a council of the French Church met in Paris under the watchful eyes of their agents. The council unilaterally withdrew from the obedience of Benedict XIII and resolved to recognise neither claimant. In September the King's uncles sent French troops to occupy Avignon. They laid siege to Benedict in his palace with the support of most of the college of cardinals and the population of the city. Louis of Orléans paid lip-service to these decisions, which had been endorsed by the royal council. But he secretly assured the beleaguered Avignon Pope of his support. Tempers frayed in Paris. 'Hatreds, jealousies and quarrels' were reported between Louis and the Duke of Burgundy. 'Certain people', Louis riposted, were making decisions in the King's name without his approval or consent. The pacific Duke of Berry was harangued by his nephew with a violence of language which shocked the older man's attendants.[25]

At the same time Louis embarked on a sustained campaign to extend his influence on the marches of the French kingdom at the expense of his uncles. His first target was the strategically critical triangle of German territory between Burgundy, the Burgundian Low Countries and the Rhine. Philip the Bold had had his eye for many years on this region, which lay across the main routes between his domains in Flanders and Burgundy. But Louis got there before him, actively acquiring retainers and allies in the region under Philip's nose. In June 1398, three months after the embarrassing summit at Reims, Louis achieved his greatest coup by buying for 2,000 *livres* a year the homage of Charles Duke of Lorraine, whose vast domains extended from the county of Burgundy to the marches of Wenceslas's duchy of Luxembourg.[26] At the opposite extremity of France the Duke of Orléans had also begun to take an aggressive interest in the affairs of the Gascon march, traditionally the preserve of the Duke of Berry. In the summer of 1398 he became the King's lieutenant on the march and took over control of the French garrisons there. A French army under Marshal Boucicaut occupied the county of Périgord, driving

out Archambaud VI, the last of the independent counts, whose domains had been complaisantly forfeited by order of the Parlement of Paris. Louis' hand was clearly visible in these events.[27]

The Duke of Orléans' opportunity finally came at the beginning of 1399. In February the King recovered his senses after nearly a year of almost continuous 'absence'. Shortly afterwards a virulent epidemic of bubonic plague hit the capital, causing most of the princes to flee to their suburban mansions or distant domains. It was a critical moment. Louis resolved to stay in Paris and made his bid for power. He took physical control of his enfeebled brother and worked on him in his intervals of coherence. Charles's official correspondence described the two men as 'inseparable'. Within a few weeks Louis had achieved a brief ascendancy in the royal council. By the summer no one doubted that he had become the dominant figure in the French government. In England Richard II's informants told him that it was 'common knowledge' in France that Charles VI had become a pliant tool in his brother's hands. The Duke of Berry urged Philip of Burgundy to reside for a while at court and reclaim his position on the council. Perhaps, he wrote from Paris, the King was not really as submissive as his brother believed: 'I am sure that when you are next here you will have even more power over the King than you used to have and quite as much as he has.' Philip took his brother's advice. In October 1399 he arrived at Rouen, where the royal court was then staying to escape the plague, and returned with it to Paris the following January. For the next eighteen months he remained close to the ailing King as his senses came and went. It was one of the longest continuous periods that Philip had passed in the capital since his succession to the county of Flanders fifteen years before. He recovered some of his old influence in government. But he never regained the unchallenged pre-eminence that he had once enjoyed. Henceforth he was forced to engage in a continual contest for power with his nephew. When he was in Paris his powerful personality usually prevailed. But he could not always be in Paris. His far-flung dominions demanded his presence. His wife and councillors, the relays of mounted messengers who brought him news and papers from Flanders and Burgundy, the devoted clerks and secretaries who managed his administration from the Hôtel de Bourgogne, these things were not enough. The Duke of Orléans by comparison was almost always present.[28]

The effect of Louis' coup was to open the floodgates of royal largesse after seven years in which they had been kept firmly closed by the Dukes of Burgundy and Berry. Périgord was granted to him in January 1400, creating with the county of Angoulême a solid

block of Orléanist territory on the northern march of the English duchy of Guyenne. In May of the same year Louis was granted the strategic fortress of Château-Thierry on the Marne, followed in July by the town and county of Dreux with its imposing castle on the east march of Normandy. In October he bought the county of Porcien, lying between Champagne and the northern border of France. Then in November 1400 he achieved a dramatic expansion of his domain in the county of Valois by buying the barony of Coucy and the neighbouring county of Soissons in Champagne from the heiress of Enguerrand de Coucy, one of the martial heroes of the previous generation. This controversial acquisition, which was widely believed to have been fraudulent, cost Louis the enormous sum of 400,000 *livres* and years of litigation against the vendor and various rival claimants. Most of the purchase money is likely to have come from the royal treasury, while the influence of the King's judges and officers proved invaluable in beating off other claims. In the result by the turn of the new century the Duke of Orléans had become the principal territorial magnate in the middle Loire, in Champagne, in the valleys of the Oise and the Aisne north of Paris and on the northern march of Guyenne. By virtue of a privilege granted to him in 1399 all of these territories were treated as part of his appanage and removed from the purview of the King's officers. In addition he was receiving the whole produce of the *gabelle* and the *taille* in his domains and a large part of the royal *aides*, together with a regular flow of cash loans, gifts and pensions from the royal treasury. The account of the Duke's Receiver-General for 1404–5, the only one to survive, records total receipts for that year amounting to 453,000 *livres*, less than a tenth of which came from the ordinary revenues of his demesne. The rest, some 409,000 *livres*, came directly or indirectly from the Crown. Even at the height of his influence Philip of Burgundy had never been able to draw subsidies on this scale.[29]

1 Houses of Burgundy and Orléans, 1407

These figures illustrate the broader truth that extensive landed domains mattered not only or even mainly for the revenues which they generated, which were often quite modest. Their real importance lay in the prestige, patronage and influence which they

conferred on their owner. They provided Louis of Orléans with a large number of retainers in northern France. They brought him grandiose castles which served as a stage for the display that was inseparable from the exercise of political power. Louis remodelled the castle of Pierrefonds and entirely rebuilt that of La Ferté-Milon. He transformed Coucy into the *'forteresce de merveilleux povoir'* celebrated by Eustache Deschamps, with its hall adorned by statues of the nine heroes of historic legend, to which Louis added the figure of Bertrand du Guesclin, the warrior-hero of his father's generation. The ruins and sculptural fragments of these great buildings, so far as they have survived the attentions of nineteenth-century restorers and twentieth-century invaders, show that luxury, propaganda and visual impact were at least as important to their owner as defence. Louis maintained an opulent household at the venerable Hôtel de Bohême in Paris which, enlarged and partly rebuilt, served as his principal residence and political headquarters. In the last decade of his life he lavished money on the construction of a vast Parisian mansion in the Rue Saint-Antoine opposite the Hôtel Saint-Pol, on land granted to him by the King 'so that we may always have him close by us'. At least five subsidiary residences were acquired in the capital at different times. Gapers liked to tot up the consumption of meat in Louis' hall: eighty carcasses of mutton a week plus twelve each of beef, veal and pork and more than 2,000 chickens in 1393. The surviving financial records, which are far from complete, record an increase in the number of Louis' household retainers as his resources grew and his political fortunes improved. They rose from an average of about 200 in the 1390s to more than 300 in the early years of the new century, making it the largest princely household of the time. His personal military retinue was at least twice this size. By the opening years of the fifteenth century Louis of Orléans had put his wild years behind him. He cultivated a political following, distributing largesse with reckless generosity, qualities which were more than enough to draw courtiers, clients and careerists into his orbit. His household was regarded as the home of modern chivalry, a stark contrast to the staid grandeur of his elderly uncles. The Castilian paladin Pero Niño, who passed several weeks in Paris in 1406 as an honorary member of Louis' household, was dazzled by his charm, his magnificent way of life, his air of power and his 'great household, full of important lords and famous knights and people of every nation'.[30]

Between 1399 and 1401 Louis set about entrenching his position. When the King was coherent he sedulously deployed his influence to refashion the administration in his own image, putting his own

clients into critical positions and taking under his wing many who were already there. These changes would stand him in good stead during Charles VI's 'absences' when he had once more to compete with his uncles on the royal council. Significant changes were made in the financial departments, which had hitherto been dominated by protégés of the Duke of Burgundy. The Chambre des Comptes, which served as the audit office of the state, and the Conseil-Général des Aides, which supervised the collection of taxes, were both stuffed with Orléanists. One of Louis' household staff became receiver of royal revenues in Paris and eventually Treasurer of France. Louis forged a close alliance with the three brothers Montaigu, scions of a formidable administrative dynasty who had previously hitched their fortunes to the star of the Duke of Berry. Jean I de Montaigu, Bishop of Chartres, the eldest of the brothers, who had risen through the financial service of the monarchy, became First President of the Chambre des Comptes. The Duke of Orléans procured the appointment of Jean II de Montaigu, Charles VI's private secretary, as Master of the Royal Household and effectively the head of the administration.

Louis was not popular among the inhabitants of Paris. But he saw to it that his allies were installed in the main centres of power there. Jean II de Montaigu was captain of the Bastille and another ally was captain of the Louvre. Guillaume de Tignonville, one of his chamberlains, became royal Provost and captain of the castle of Montlhéry. In the provinces Orléanists gradually migrated into the offices of the royal *baillis* and seneschals and the principal captaincies. It was at least partly a question of generations. In 1400 the Duke of Berry was nearly sixty and the Duke of Burgundy fifty-eight. Both were old men by the standards of the day. Jean de Berry had no male heir, and Philip of Burgundy's heirs were unlikely to inherit his pivotal position in the French government. The Dauphin was eight years old, a sickly child like most of his siblings who would be dead within a year. Louis of Orléans by comparison was 'Fortune's companion', in Christine de Pisan's graphic phrase. For the mass of men who crowded into the Hôtel de Bohême or answered his calls to arms, he was the future, the kingly figure that Charles VI might have been.[31]

Once the Dukes of Burgundy and Berry realised what was happening they responded by jockeying for patronage and position, provoking an inflationary spiral of corruption. All of the notables of the administration owed their jobs, their political survival and their fortunes to the patronage of one or other of the princes. They shared in the spoils of the monarchy, taking bribes from outsiders and fees, gifts and pensions from the King, augmenting their salaries

with ‘extraordinary’ supplements which were in reality permanent and doubled or trebled their value. They developed their own patronage among their subordinates, multiplying posts down to the lowest levels of the civil service, conferring ‘extraordinary supplements’ on their protégés, tacitly endorsing the practice of allowing functionaries to trade their jobs and nominate their successors. The leading administrative families created dense networks of alliances, fortified by judicious dynastic marriages among their own kind. These grandees of the bureaucracy returned the favour of their princely patrons by supporting them in the councils of the state, by complaisantly sealing improvident grants in their favour and allowing the king’s revenues to be diverted to their use. As the wheel of fortune cast down some patrons and raised up others they survived by switching their loyalties as best they could.

If the protest of 1413 by the University of Paris is to be believed Arnaud de Corbie, who had by then been Chancellor for a quarter of a century, drew an annual salary including ‘extraordinary supplements’ of 5,000 *livres* a year, twice the ordinary rate plus at least as much again in pensions, gifts, fees and perquisites. Alexander Le Boursier, Receiver-General of the *aides*, acquired numerous properties in and around Paris during his term of office including one of the grandest mansions in the city. *‘Je sçay un large despensier’* (‘I know a big spender’), sang the poet Eustache Deschamps about him. The war treasurer Raimond Raguier, a protégé of the Queen, was another prominent administrator who invested the gains of his office in property in the capital, spending 30,000 francs on putting up mansions, castles and other *‘edifices coustageuses’*. But by far the most famous case was Jean II de Montaigu, whose position as Master of the Royal Household brought him unrivalled influence and riches. Montaigu was an exceptionally able administrator with an encyclopaedic knowledge of the royal administration and the complexities of the King’s finances. A self-made man, short and thin, with a mottled beard and a limp, he aroused derision and fear in roughly equal measure. Montaigu was the outstanding example of a fortune made in royal service. He took between 6,000 to 8,000 *livres* in salary and ‘extraordinary’ supplements, in addition to lavish gifts and pensions. He received large grants of property from the Crown and laid out his cash profits in buying more. He lent money to the Treasury at high rates, taking the King’s plate and jewels as security. He rebuilt and endowed churches. His brothers became bishops and archbishops and his daughters married into the nobility. He held court in a grand mansion in the Rue Barbette in Paris. His newly built castle at Marcoussis on the Orléans road was one of the marvels of the age.

Beyond the moat, portcullis and battlemented walls of Marcoussis, a hostile observer wrote, the great man's friends could admire the superb finish of the stone and woodwork, the chapel with its flashy jewels and precious vessels, the galleries and halls, the carved chimneys, the furniture, carpets and hangings, the gold and silver plate, the walled park and the stables filled with expensive horses. 'Where can Montaigu have found the money for all this?' asked a contemporary pamphleteer. It was a good question.[32]

A few years after the Duke of Orléans' bid for power a long allegorical pamphlet, the *Songe Véritable*, appeared in Paris. The anonymous author was evidently a minor but well-informed official of the King's household too humble, too loyal or too angry to have sold himself to any of the princely houses. In 1,600 venomous rhyming couplets he imagined Poverty leading Everyman among the streets and mansions of the capital in search of Truth. From False Government they hear of the King's sorry state and the grandiose establishments of his leading subjects. From Experience and Fortune they discover the greed of the Duke of Orléans, taking from the Treasury 'with both hands' to fund the rebuilding of Coucy and Pierrefonds; the embezzlements of the Queen and her brother; the covetousness and folly of the Duke of Berry; the princely life of Jean de Montaigu; all of them 'thieves', 'looters' and 'whores'. It is difficult to say how widely the *Songe Véritable* was read. Not very widely, judging by the small number of surviving manuscripts. But the author's opinions were shared by many who had never heard of his work. The same anger without the abusive language can be found in the writings of Eustache Deschamps and Christine de Pisan and in countless sermons, treatises and ballads of the day. These writers tapped into a deep vein of public resentment. For at least half a century there had been a significant constituency in French politics for what can loosely be called administrative reform but was in reality a complex mixture of moral puritanism, financial economy and hostility to the endemic corruption of the public service. Within the French political class it drew strong support from elements in the civil service, the Parlement, the University of Paris and the Church, all institutions which were to become increasingly vocal forces in French politics in the coming years.

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In 1401 the mutual resentments and jealousies of the Dukes of Burgundy and Orléans came to a head. The spark was once again provided by the papal schism, aggravated this time by a serious political crisis in Germany. The region between the Rhine and the north-eastern march of France, with its mosaic of autonomous

Imperial territories, was becoming an important preoccupation of French politicians, as it would remain for much of the fifteenth century. The progressive decay of the German Empire, a perennial theme of European politics for more than 200 years, was felt most at the periphery, in the Rhineland and the Low Countries and in northern Italy. Philip of Burgundy had profited by it to build the foundations of a state straddling the political and linguistic frontiers of the region. There were now increasingly obvious signs that Louis of Orléans planned to do the same. In August 1400 the Electors of the German Empire removed the drunken, bankrupt and ineffectual Wenceslas of Luxembourg from the throne. In his place they elected Ruprecht Count Palatine, the head of one of the two major branches of the house of Wittelsbach. One of the Electors' main complaints against Wenceslas was that he had been too complaisant in his dealings with Gian Galeazzo Visconti of Milan, whose vast territorial ambitions in northern Italy threatened to extinguish the vestigial presence of the Empire south of the Alps. Another, closely associated with it, was that he had been become too close to the French, allowing them to take possession of Genoa and bowing far too readily to French pressure to withdraw Germany from the obedience of the Roman Pope.

The disputed title to the German crown could hardly fail to provoke a response in France. The Duke of Orléans had had a personal alliance with Wenceslas ever since their meeting at Reims in 1398. Philip of Burgundy on the other hand had founded his dynastic ambitions in the Low Countries in large part upon an alliance with the Bavarian Wittelsbachs, who controlled the Imperial counties of Hainaut and Holland and had married into his family. Charles VI's Queen, who owed her marriage to the Duke of Burgundy, was a Wittelsbach princess. Both sides in the German imbroglio appealed to France for support, or at least a benevolent neutrality. In Paris the royal council was paralysed by internal differences, leaving each party to pursue its own foreign policy. The Duke of Burgundy saw in the change of regime in Germany an opportunity to consolidate existing alliances and revive the old project of a combined French and German solution to the papal schism. He wanted to trade political support to Ruprecht for help in forcing the abdication of both Popes. For his part the Duke of Orléans had no interest in engineering the removal of Benedict XIII and immediately declared himself for Wenceslas. He even recruited French troops for an expedition to relieve Frankfurt, which was then under siege by Ruprecht's allies. This project was only abandoned when the city fell at the end of October 1400 and Wenceslas's cause in Germany collapsed.[33]

Undeterred, the Duke of Orléans set about expanding his alliances in Imperial territory around the edges of Philip's domains. In the spring of 1401 he recruited William Duke of Guelders and his brother Rainald who would succeed him as duke in the following year. William promised to do homage to Charles VI for a lump sum of 50,000 *écus* and to Louis himself for another 35,000 *écus*. He undertook to make at least 500 men-at-arms available to the French King. These arrangements were nominally directed against England. Indeed they were snatched from under the noses of the English ambassadors who were at that very moment trying renew their country's traditional links with Guelders. The Duke of Burgundy, however, regarded himself as the real target and there is every reason to think that he was. Guelders was one of the most powerful military principalities of the German Rhineland. William was a captain of European reputation and a long-standing regional rival of the house of Burgundy. At the end of May 1401 Louis of Orléans entered Paris accompanied by the Duke of Guelders and a magnificent cavalcade of followers. Neither the Duke of Burgundy nor his brother Berry had been consulted about Louis' new alliances. They were visibly furious. There were *'grands grommelis'* against the Duke of Orléans in the Hôtel de Nesle and Hôtel de Bourgogne. It was the moment, according to a well-informed source, when rivalry turned to mortal hatred. In June Philip received a confidential emissary from Ruprecht, who had by now firmly identified the Duke of Orléans as his enemy. The main purpose of his mission was to obstruct Louis' plans, reports of which had reached him, to betroth his infant daughter to the Dauphin. But he was also instructed, if the opportunity arose, to discuss with Philip of Burgundy the possibility of French support for a campaign against Louis' father-in-law Gian Galeazzo Visconti in northern Italy. Ruprecht's agent seems to have had some success with these schemes. The betrothal was quietly dropped. During the summer he was actively discussing a political alliance with the Duke of Burgundy, the Queen, and possibly other prominent French noblemen, which would be expressly directed against Louis of Orléans and Gian Galeazzo.[34]

It is far from clear what Philip hoped to achieve by this sudden and dangerous escalation in his dispute with his nephew. The most plausible explanation is that he was moved by sheer frustration at the mounting difficulties that he was experiencing in getting his way on issues of fundamental importance to him. Foremost of these was the papal schism. Benedict XIII had now been deprived of his authority over the French Church for nearly three years. For most of that time he had been blockaded in his palace at Avignon. The experience had done nothing to dent the old man's obduracy. Philip

blamed Louis of Orléans for frustrating his projects in Paris and covertly supporting Benedict's resistance at Avignon. Louis' obvious determination to expand his interests in the regions beyond France's northern and eastern frontiers in a region which Philip had for years regarded as his own sphere of interest added a fresh bone of contention. In June 1401 the Duke of Orléans persuaded Charles VI to take the Imperial city of Toul in Lorraine under French protection and to appoint Louis himself as its custodian against the vociferous protests of the Emperor. Some time after this he began to press Charles to cede to him the cathedral city of Tournai, a French enclave on the River Scheldt whose diocese included most of Burgundian Flanders. In the following year Louis of Orléans would achieve his most spectacular coup against his uncle's interests in this region by occupying the duchy of Luxembourg, part of the original family domain of the Emperor Wenceslas. The impecunious Emperor had mortgaged it to his creditors. Louis succeeded in taking over the mortgage and with it the right to possession. This transaction, which was largely funded from the proceeds of royal taxes in his French lands, brought him effective control of an impoverished but large and strategically important territory between the Meuse and the Moselle on France's north-eastern march. The Duke's triumph must have been all the sweeter for the fact that it had previously been administered by arrangement with the mortgagees by the Duke of Burgundy. Philip's garrisons and officials were promptly removed and replaced by those of his nephew.[35]

These things were symptomatic of a more general shift of power from the displaced elder statesman to his cocky young nephew which can only have intensified Philip's anger. Yet his new belligerence was a tactical error. It cost him some important voices on the King's council including those of the other royal princes. Outmanoeuvred and marginalised, Philip left Paris in high dudgeon for his domains in June 1401, abandoning the field to his rival. In his absence Louis of Orléans took effective control of the government machine. According to a contemporary chronicler, who appears to have been one of Louis' household clerks, the Duke of Orléans 'clothed himself with regal powers, assuming complete authority over the King's affairs along with those of the Queen and their children'. Charles VI was enjoying a period of remission which appears to have persisted until some time in September. He was easily persuaded to fall in with his brother's ideas. Louis seized the opportunity to reverse most of the major foreign policy initiatives for which his uncle had been responsible. At the beginning of August 1401, at a private meeting with his brother, Louis procured

the King's signature on letters patent publicly disowning those who were holding Benedict XIII besieged in his palace in Avignon. The King declared that he was conferring his personal protection on the Pope and appointed Louis himself as his guardian. Dissenting voices were silenced. Simon Cramaud Bishop of Poitiers, one of Benedict's foremost opponents on the royal council, was peremptorily instructed to stop coming. Two of Louis' retainers were despatched to Avignon to reassure the Pope of the French King's desire to repair the breach between them and to bully the cardinals into reaching an accommodation with him. A few days later another embassy left Paris for Milan with instructions full of compliments and emollient proposals addressed to Gian Galeazzo Visconti. Meanwhile, from Brussels, the Duke of Burgundy actively encouraged Ruprecht's plans to invade Gian Galeazzo's duchy.[36]

In the last week of October 1401 the Dukes of Burgundy, Berry and Bourbon met in the cathedral town of Senlis, north of Paris. The occasion was a council of the French Church, the latest attempt to devise an agreed solution to the papal schism. The Duke of Orléans, sensing a Burgundian scheme, boycotted the whole proceedings. In the margins of the assembly the princes and councillors present discussed the wider problems of the French government, now reduced to complete incoherence by the disability of the King and the mutual jealousies of his family. Philip held a dinner for them in his lodgings. But whatever conviviality there was evaporated as his continued isolation became clear. On 25 October 1401 he left Senlis for Arras. On the road he despatched an angry letter to the Parlement explaining why he was not prepared to return to Paris to resume his seat in the council. There would be no point, he said, while the King's illness persisted. It was clear, reading between the lines, that the real reason was that Philip was not prepared to sit on a council which he could no longer dominate. It was 'distressing and painful' to him, he said, to hear how France was being governed in his absence; 'things are not as they should be'.

The Duke's decision to address his complaints to the councillors of the Parlement was significant. Of all the principal organs of the French state it was in the Parlement that his supporters were strongest. Although the presidents of the two chambers were both Orléanists in 1401, the long careers and low turnover of its personnel meant that its membership still reflected the many years during which Philip had dominated the French government and controlled its patronage. But it was not only or even mainly a question of jobbery. The jurists of the Parlement were divided among themselves, like all the *grands corps* of the French state. Judges are natural allies of political reform. As a body the

councillors of the Parlement had an ideological belief in the destinies of the impersonal state surpassing the clash of political interests, the concerns of individual monarchs or the follies of a single reign. It made them wary of any group which tried to appropriate the powers and resources of the Crown in its own interests. Jean de Montreuil, a prominent member of the King's secretariat, regarded the Parlement as an island of rectitude in a sea of official corruption. Philip's brief manifesto of October 1401 began the gradual process by which the dukes of Burgundy positioned themselves as leaders of the opposition and champions of reform.[37]

Philip of Burgundy arrived at Arras at the end of October 1401 to celebrate the betrothal of his second son, Anthony, to the daughter of the Count of Saint-Pol, the leading magnate of Artois and northern Picardy. The occasion brought together Philip's sons, his friends and allies, his principal councillors and many of the leading noblemen of his domains. Surrounded by his supporters, Philip resolved to return to Paris to confront his enemies in force. A small army was recruited, probably from the retainers gathered about him at Arras. With a payroll strength of some 620 men-at-arms and twenty-five archers, he must have had at least 1,200 mounted men with him when he set out from Bapaume at the beginning of December. They were ordered to wear their weapons concealed beneath their cloaks. But the cavalcade must still have made an intimidating spectacle as it passed through the northern gate of Paris on 7 December. Fresh contingents arrived from Brabant and Burgundy to swell their numbers over the following weeks. Philip set up his headquarters in the Hôtel de Bourgogne and quartered his men in billets in the surrounding streets. The Duke of Orléans was at the Hôtel du Prévôt, the mansion by the royal palace in the Rue Saint-Antoine that he had recently embellished for his private use. From here he in turn called on his retainers and allies to bring as many troops to Paris as they could find. They came, filling the streets around the Bastille and the Hôtel Saint-Pol. Large numbers of Breton mercenaries arrived to reinforce them. The Duke of Guelders sent more, in accordance with his agreement of May. The capital was divided between the two camps. Whenever the two rivals emerged from their urban palaces they were escorted by companies of heavily armed men.[38]

The Queen withdrew to the castle of Vincennes and set about brokering a settlement. The stand-off lasted for more than a month while discussions continued. Finally, on 6 January 1402, the rivals were persuaded to submit to the binding arbitration of the Queen and the Dukes of Berry, Bourbon and Anjou. On 14 January 1402

the arbitrators produced a wordy award requiring the Dukes of Burgundy and Orléans never to fight against each other and to remain 'good, wholesome, true and loyal friends' in future. But the terms assumed that this might be too much to hope for. Elaborate provision was made for cooling-off periods and mediation in the event ('which God forbid') that they took up arms against each other in spite of the moratorium. The award produced a superficial and short-lived reconciliation. Peace was proclaimed in the streets. The rivals rode to the Duke of Berry's mansion at the Hôtel de Nesle to confirm the terms with a meal and a kiss. Both sides dismissed their troops. Paris exploded in joy.[39]

In reality Philip had lost. None of his grievances against the Duke of Orléans had been addressed and he received no assurances about the future. His position in the royal council was no stronger than it had been before. In February 1402 the King briefly recovered his senses and the council was able to deal with the lavish royal grants which had impoverished the royal domain in the past few years. The terms were highly favourable to the Duke of Orléans. Charles VI revoked all grants made from the royal domain or from forfeitures since his accession and promised that he would make no more until his debts were repaid and the dilapidation of his domain made good. But the largest grants, in favour of the royal dukes, the Queen and prominent noblemen on the council, were to stand. Louis of Orléans himself was promised a fresh grant from the royal domain if it his appanage was found to be worth less than those of his uncles.[40]

The old row about relations with Benedict XIII now resurfaced with a new virulence. The Dukes of Berry and Burgundy bitterly resented Louis' role as Benedict's 'protector', which enabled him to undermine their policy of forcing the Avignon Pope from his throne. For his part Louis threw off the subterfuges of the past few years and openly denounced the decision to withdraw France from the obedience of Avignon. He was furious about the continuing siege of the papal palace which in spite of his role as the Pope's protector he had been unable to bring to an end. In February 1402, when the King was enjoying a prolonged period of lucidity, Louis got him to seal a letter to the cardinals threatening to confiscate their assets in France and blockade the whole city of Avignon unless control of the barricades around the palace was handed over to his representatives in the city. This initiative provoked a war for the King's ear. At the beginning of March the Dukes of Berry and Burgundy surprised Charles conferring in a corridor of the Hôtel Saint-Pol with the Duke of Orléans and Benedict's personal representative. They were talking about lifting the siege and restoring France to the Avignon

obedience. There was a terrible scene. Louis threatened to go personally to Avignon to lift the siege of the papal palace. The Duke of Berry said he would stop him by force. The three princes exchanged abuse as the King vainly struggled to calm them down.

After this incident the King's uncles went to great lengths to control access to him in his periods of lucidity and insulate him from the influence of his brother. A Castilian embassy which had arrived in Paris to plead for the beleaguered Pope was kept away from the Hôtel Saint-Pol for a month and only admitted to Charles's presence after he had been obliged to listen to a long and uncompromising sermon about the Pope's crimes and perjuries. Later, when the university of Toulouse sent a delegation to call for France to return to Benedict's obedience, the Duke of Berry had them all arrested and thrown in prison. This could not be allowed to continue. But the compromise ultimately agreed merely confirmed the incoherence of the French government's position. Two delegations, one answerable to the Duke of Berry and the other to Louis of Orléans, were sent to Avignon to hold the ring between Benedict and his adversaries. Among the King's other councillors there was a real fear of civil war. With the Duke of Burgundy about to leave once more for his domains, a fresh treaty was patched up between Louis and his uncles in the middle of March 1402. They declared their intention of remaining friends in perpetuity. They undertook that they would utter no 'gross or insulting words' about each other and swore not to resort to armed force. In this black atmosphere Philip left the capital for the north on 31 March 1402. As soon as he had gone a fresh crisis broke, provoked by France's other major foreign policy issue, relations with England.[41]

Notes

1
Chron. R. St-Denis, ii, 754–8. Palace: Guerout (1949–51).

2
Guillebert de Metz, 'Description', 160, 232–4; *Chron. Bourbon*, 269–70; Cagny, *Chron.*, 127–8; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 3.

3
Deschamps, *Oeuvres*, v, 51–2. Economy: Fourquin, 273–89; Geremek (1968), 92, 123.

4
Chron. R. St-Denis, ii, 692–6, iii, 142–4, 350; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 35–6, ii, 287. J.-N. Biraben, *Les hommes et la peste en France et dans les pays européens et méditerranéens* (1973), 119, 364; Dupâquier et al., 326–7; *Vic, *Hist. gén. Lang.*, x, 1901–3 (example of Carcassonne). Tax farmers: e.g. BN Fr. 25707/480 (Caen); *Doc. Amiens*, iii, 90–101 (esp. 90, 91, 94), 135, 146–51 (esp. 147), 195–202 (esp. 201); and generally, Rey, i, 61–3, 269, 275, 285–6, 289, 399, Nieuwenhuysen, ii, 294–6.

5
H. St-Pol: Bournon (1879), 73–7; Rey, ii, 23–8. Chancery: Morel, 80–4, 115–17. Louvre: Sauval, ii, 17; Berty, i, 125–7, 160–1. Châtelet: Batiffol (1896–7), lxi, 245–51, 255–64. Palace: Guerout (1949–51), ii, 122–84; Dupont-Ferrier (1933 [1]), 54.

6
Favier (1974), 108–10. D. of Berry: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 522; and see the September page of the calendar of the *Très Riches Heures*, which probably shows Bicêtre and not as commonly stated Saumur. D. of Burgundy: Petit (1909), 26–42.

7
Guillebert de Metz, 'Description', 200; *Contribuables*, 22–3, 37 (roll of 1421); Favier (1974), 93–113; L. Mirot (1919), 157–8, 166–8.

8
Coville (1888), 94–5; David, 55–64; Guillebert de Metz, 'Description', 199; *Menagier de Paris*, 99. Alttöting: *Paris 1400*, 174–5.

9
Ord., vii, 510 (quotation); Favier (1974), 269–81; Geremek (1968), 119–21, 136; Geremek (1976), 30–4, 189–90, 285–93; Guillebert de Metz, 'Description', 232–3 (rooms, taverns, beggars).

10
Ord., v, 685–7 (1383 measures); Favier (1974), 251–64.

11
Coville (1888), 101–5, 108–9; Favier (1974), 37–40; Fagniez, 131–2; M. Saint-Léon, *Histoire des corporations de métiers* (1941), 213; Lespinasse, *Métiers*, i, 259–61; Lombard-Jourdan, 127. Quantities: Guillebert de Metz, 'Description', 232–3. Broadly comparable figures are given by the *Menagier de Paris*, 170–1. Privileges: *Ord.*, vi, 685, vii, 179–80. Jouvenel: *Hist.*, 250.

12
Batiffol (1896–7), lxi, 258–64; Geremek (1976), 23–9; Favier (1974), 22, 26.

13
Châtelet: Batiffol (1896–7), lxi, 231. Petit Châtelet: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, i, 100. Louvre: Berty, i, 125–7, 162. Bastille: *Chronographia*, iii, 49–50.

14
Summary, with references, in Sumption, iii, 53–60, 395–6, 402–5, 442–9, 490–2, 535–6, 846–7.

15
Bonet, *L'apparicion Maistre Jean de Meun*, ed. I. Arnold (1926), 14; Deschamps, *Oeuvres*, v, 224–5.

16
King: *Songe Véritable*, 231, 242–4. Berry: Autrand (2000 [2]), 311–12; *Menagier*, 170–1. Bourbon: *Chron. Bourbon*, 272.

17
Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 146; Pisan, *Livre des fais*, i, 146. Revenues: Nieuwenhuysen, i, 167–8, 191–2; Vaughan (1962), 227–33. Figures exclude royal grants, royal taxes and borrowings. The estimated increase in taxable capacity in wartime is based on the ducal taxes collected in 1397 for the Nicopolis crusade: see Vaughan (1962), 232–3.

18
Pocquet (1939 [2]), 131–4, 135–40; Pocquet (1940–1), 119; Nieuwenhuysen, i, 167, 194–5, ii, 378 (yields fell after 1397, ibid., ii, 289–303); Vaughan (1962), 227–30.

19
Rey, ii, 594–5, 596–8; Lacour (1934 [3]), 236–42; Froissart, *Chron.* (KL), xiv, 63 (quotation). Languedoc: *Ord.*, viii, 434–5; *Hist. Gen. Lang*, ix, 986–7, x, 1072–3; AN J188B/15 (regrant, Feb. 1402); AN J382/17 (revenues). Royal taxes: *Choix de pièces*, i, 243–5; Figures from AN KK250 and Rey, ii, 597–8.

20
Isabelle: balanced assessment in Gibbons. King's symptoms: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, ii, 404–6, 486. Resources: Kimm, 40–4, 46–8, 85–114; Rey, ii, 178, 179–80; Thibault, 236–45, 254–6, 261–2, 267–8. Louis of Bavaria: Thibault, 318–20, 370–1; *Collections du trésor royal*, 38–40, *493–6; cf. Buonaccorso Pitti, *Cronica*, ed. A. Bacchi de la Lega (1905), 94; Rey, ii, 190–1, 305.

21
Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 186; Rey, ii, 579–80, 582–8, 590–3.

22
Songe Véritable, 292, 302–3; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 758; Philippe de Mézières, *La songe du vieil pélerin*, ed. G. W. Copland (1969), ii, 466–9; Deschamps, *Oeuvres*, vii, 120–1; *L. de Carbonnières, *La procédure devant la chambre criminelle du Parlement de Paris au xive siècle* (2004), 816–17; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 36, 738; Pisan, *Livre des fais*, i, 172–4; ibid., *Livre corps policie*, 46; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 88, 96; Baye, *Journ.*, ii (1888), 294.

23
Status: *Ord.*, vii, 530–8; Froissart, *Chron.* (KL), xv, 49. Resources: BN Fr. n.a. 3653/406, 407; *Jarry, 26–7, *392–406, *418; Rey, ii, 602–3.

24
Jarry, 82–6, 91, 93, 103–6, 125–6, 230; Nordberg, 15–16; *Pièces rel. à Louis d'Orléans*, 78–82; *Ord.*, vii, 471–2.

25
Choix de pièces, i, 140–2; Valois (1896–1902), iii, 126–36, 150–84, 190–200, 229–37; *Jarry, 439–43; Lehoux (1966–8), ii, 384–6; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 135 ('hatreds …'); Ehrle, 'Neue Materialen', vii, 93–4 ('certain people …').

26
'Docs. Luxemb.', nos 45, 50–1, 75, 97–8.

27
Gall. Reg., iii, no. 13375; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, ii, 648–50; Lalande, 77–81, esp. 78; Jarry, 219.

28
Chron. R. St-Denis, ii, 678, 684, 692; Lehoux (1966–8), ii, 416–17; AN J517/2A; Salmon, 'Lamentacions', 47–8. Flight from plague: *Itin. Ph. le Hardi*, 286–93; Lehoux (1966–8), ii, 416n[1], iii, 487–9; Troubat, ii, 813. Philip at court: *Cartellieri (1910), 151; *Itin. Ph. le Hardi*, 291–314; 'Séjours', 485–90.

29
Périgord: *Dessalles, 8–68, 77–96; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 317, 324. Ch.-Thierry: *Ord.*, viii, 383–4, 448–9, ix, 261–4, 696. Porcien: Jarry, 234. Coucy: Lacaille; Jarry, 240–2; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 210; Petit, 'Seconde justification', 26. Privilege: *Ord.*, viii, 331–2, 405. Taxes: Coville (1932), 360–2; Nordberg, 20–3. Receipts: Nordberg, 22; Rey, ii, 603.

30
Castles: Mesqui (1987–8), 134–59, 204–19, 281–93; Deschamps, *Oeuvres*, i, 269. Paris residences: Ribéra-Pervillé (1980); Alexandre (quote at 377); *Menagier*, 171. Household: Gonzalez, 65, 145, 309–10. Pero Niño: *Victorial*,

236.

31

Financial depts.: Nordberg, 53–4, 55–6, 66. Receiver (Jean de la Cloche): *Coll. Bastard d'Estang*, nos 268–9, 289, 308; *Gall. Reg.*, iv, no. 16905. Montaigus: Borrelli de Serres, iii, 323–5; Jassemin, 344; Merlet, 262–4; *Gall. Reg.*, iv, no. 16977. Bailliages, captaincies: Demurger, 158–61; Nordberg, 39–52; *Gall. Reg.*, iv, 16481, 17057, 17081; Gonzalez, App., 535–8. Christine de Pisan, *Mutacion*, iv. 77.

32

See Montreuil, *Opera*, i, 53–61. Corbie: 'Remontrances', 434–5 (Arts. 48–9) (all figures converted to *livres tournois*). Boursier: *Sauval, iii, 271, 320, 327, 328, 654; Deschamps, *Oeuvres*, v, 49. Raguier: 'Remontrances', 424–5 (Arts. 9–11). Montaigu: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 268–70; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 291–2; Rey, ii, 581–2; Merlet, 270–3; *Songe Véritable*, 259–61.

33

Moranvillé, 494–9, *506; *Reichstagsakten*, iii, nos 213–18, 223, iv, no. 187; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, ii, 762, 766; 'Docs. Luxemb.', no. 110; Jarry, 238–9.

34

D. of Guelders: Vaughan, 97–101; *Gedenkwaardigheden*, iii, 238–41; 'Docs. Luxemb.', nos 99, 104–5; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 8–10, 12; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 146; *Reichstagsakten*, iv, no. 297. Emissary: *Reichstagsakten*, iv, nos 294–6, 298, v, 153–6. Betrothal: see *Valois (1896–1902), iii, 241n[1].

35

Toul: *Reichstagsakten*, iv, no. 300; 'Docs. Luxemb.', nos 111–12. Tournai: *Extr. Reg. Tournai*, i, 51. Luxembourg: Vaughan (1962), 102–4; Schoos, 141–2; Nordberg, 171–2; Jarry, 273–5; 'Doc. Luxemb.', no. 119; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 42–4; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 35.

36

Itin. Ph. le Hardi, 314; 'Geste des nobles', 108; *Choix de pièces*, i, 212–13; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 10–12, 18. Papacy: *Choix de pièces*, i, 203–7; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, ii, 766–8; Alpartil, *Chron. Actit.*, 120–1; Ehrle, 'Neue Materialen', vii, 172–5; Valois (1896–1902), iii, 243–4; *Reichstagsakten*, v, nos 154–5.

37

Itin. Ph. le Hardi, 318; Ehrle, 'Neue Materialen', vii, 255; Valois (1896–1902), iii, 252–3; *Choix de pièces*, i, 212–13. Parlement: Autrand (1981), 121, 124; Montreuil, Ep. 38, *Opera*, i, 60.

38

Philip: AD Côte d'Or B1528, fols 44vo–45, B1532, fols 157vo–158vo, 263; B1538, fol. 120; B11736; BN Coll. Bourgogne 54, fol. 55; *Itin. Ph. le Hardi*, 319–20. Louis: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 14; Jarry, 261–2; BN Fr. n.a. 3640/395.

39

AN J359/23; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 16–18; *Chronographia*, iii, 192–3; *Choix de pièces*, i, 220–6.

40

Ord., viii, 484–6, xii, 205–6.

41

Siege: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 20–2; Alpartil, *Chron. Actit.*, 132. Scene in corridor: Ehrle, 'Neue Materialen', vii, 204–8; *Choix de pièces*, i, 228; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 20–4. Compromise: *Choix de pièces*, i, 227–39. Departure: *Itin. Ph. le Hardi*, 322–3.

CHAPTER II

Divided Island: England, 1399–1402

At the opening of the fifteenth century France's relations with England were governed by the treaty of Paris. The treaty had been concluded in March 1396 after long and difficult negotiations and sealed in October of that year by Richard II's meeting with Charles VI outside Calais and his marriage to the King's seven-year-old daughter Isabelle. But, in spite of the imposing ceremonial which marked the occasion, it resolved nothing. It simply preserved the status quo by imposing a truce on the belligerents and their allies for a period of twenty-eight years from the expiry of the current truce in 1398 until September 1426. The status quo was extremely unfavourable to England. It was the result of three decades of English defeats, reflecting the considerable disparity of wealth and power between the two states. The English dynasty's domains in France, which for a brief moment in the 1360s had covered more than a third of the kingdom, had been reduced to two small enclaves: the massively fortified town of Calais in the north and the cities of Bordeaux and Bayonne in the south-west together with their immediate hinterland and a thin coastal strip extending from the Gironde to the Pyrenees. The treaty effectively acknowledged the loss of almost all of Edward III's conquests in France for at least a generation. In theory the twenty-eight years for which it was supposed to last would allow time for the negotiation of a permanent settlement. But, having for practical purposes secured their war aims and brought an end to the war, the French government saw no reason to make concessions. The project of a permanent settlement was tacitly abandoned.

These expectations were rudely shaken by the deposition of Richard II in 1399. No one had been more dismayed by this event than Philip Duke of Burgundy. Philip had been the main architect of the peace and Richard II had been its strongest advocate in England. Richard's disappearance also dissolved the marriage alliance which had been the main guarantee of its permanence. It was widely believed in Paris that the English had deposed their king because they objected to the settlement of 1396. Writing to his brother, the Duke of Berry described the news as a declaration of war. The new ruler of England owed his throne to popular sentiment, he said, and

the English 'like nothing better than war'. This was a complete misunderstanding both of English attitudes to the peace and of the reasons for Richard II's unpopularity. But it was a misunderstanding that was widely shared. The concerns of Charles VI's ministers were fed by the reports of French refugees returning from England over the following weeks with exaggerated accounts of anti-French sentiment across the Channel. There was in addition an ideological dimension. The political community in France was outraged by the whole notion of deposing a crowned monarch, something which had never been seriously contemplated even at the lowest point of their mad King's fortunes. *'O detestabile monstrum,'* cried the official chronicler of Saint-Denis. The Duke of Burgundy, a man of authoritarian instincts with a profound sense of the dignity of a king's office, felt this as strongly as anyone. He was also the last statesman to cling to the ancient, perhaps outdated, notion that the English and French royal families belonged to a single cousinhood. The deposition of Richard II was all the more shocking to a man who felt bound by ties of kinship to both the victim and the perpetrator. Such evidence as there is suggests that Charles VI shared this view in his periods of lucidity. In a letter signed with his own hand the King declared that Richard had been his son-in-law and that his fate had made him 'as angry as any man could be … and as every prince or honourable man should be'. Tendentious accounts in verse and prose of Richard's last months circulated widely in France, feeding a generalised hostility to England and its people which found its way into the final pages of Froissart's chronicle and the verses of Eustache Deschamps and Christine de Pisan.[1]

The news of Richard's deposition reached France in about the middle of October 1399. The court was at Rouen, sheltering from the plague then decimating the population of Paris. On the 22nd the full council met in the presence of the King. It was decided to send a diplomatic mission urgently to England to find out what was going on. It was led by Pierre Fresnel Bishop of Meaux, a man with nearly twenty years' experience of diplomatic missions in England and Scotland. In the meantime the councillors feared the worst. The garrisons were reinforced in the Pas de Calais and on the Gascon march. Watch duty was reimposed for the first time in years in Normandy and Picardy and everywhere south of the Loire. Shortly, the first signs appeared of a more aggressive response. According to reports reaching England, a fleet was put together in the French Channel ports in the winter of 1399–1400. Attempts were made to agree a coordinated response with the Scots. A prominent Gascon nobleman, the lord of Albret, was sent to foment opposition to

Henry IV in the south-west. ‘No reasonable man, high or low, could be indifferent to events so perverse, so detestable, such a terrible example to others,’ he was instructed to say; ‘nothing so shocking can be found in any of our ancient histories.’ Pierre Fresnel and his colleagues arrived at Westminster at the end of October 1399. They found, perhaps to their surprise, that they were received with extravagant courtesy. Four days of festivities were proclaimed in their honour. Henry IV showed every sign of wanting to remain on good terms with France and both parties declared their intention in principle of confirming the peace of 1396. Arrangements were made to deal with the matter at a conference to be convened at Calais early in the following year. The views of the French ambassadors are not recorded. But it must have been obvious to them that Henry IV was preoccupied with securing his throne and had neither the means nor the ambition for aggressive enterprises against France.[2]

Henry IV had been proclaimed King of England amid general popular rejoicing but he owed his crown mainly to armed force and to the clients, allies and retainers of his family. For wider support he depended on the anger provoked by the tyranny of Richard II’s last years. In the nature of things its impact faded as the new King confronted the dilemmas of power and old grievances were overlaid by fresher ones directed against Henry himself. Henry’s coup had been too recent, too violent, too shocking to the sensibilities of a conservative society in which legitimacy and law were the foundations of political authority. The official narrative was that Richard had abdicated. But no one imagined that he had done so voluntarily. Strictly speaking the new King was not even the next in line to the throne. The eight-year-old Earl of March, who was descended from Edward III’s second son, Lionel Duke of Clarence, would have had a better claim if he had been in a position to assert it. All of this meant that Henry IV could never press his authority too far. He was beholden to too many people. Their support was often opportunistic and fragile. Some had originally joined his cause to help him recover the duchy of Lancaster and to right the wrongs of Richard II without ever intending to make him king. Others, even among those who had cheered with the rest in October 1399, had deserted Richard II impulsively, without conviction, in the panic-stricken attempt to save their fortunes and their skins as the political world about them fell apart. Among the wider public there was a tendency, born ‘in taverns and at other popular gatherings’ and encouraged by radical preachers and rabble-rousers, to view his accession as in some way conditional, the outcome of a deal with the English people which bound him to abandon the more abrasive instruments of government deployed by Richard II, including

taxation.[3] What was overtly declared in taverns and crowds was implicit in much of the resistance which Henry encountered in Parliament throughout his reign. The sacral kingship of the previous reign, supported by an essentially autocratic ideology and by rituals borrowed from the court of France, was dead.

The new reign was to be dominated by constant warfare on the northern march, nationalist movements in Wales and Ireland and persistent conspiracies and rebellions in England. Although opposition to Henry IV never commanded general support among the English political community, some of it tapped into rich veins of popular radicalism. The Lollards, a loose sect inspired by followers of the Oxford theologian John Wyclif, whose few consistent traits included a root-and-branch rejection of the authority and the riches of the Church, achieved their greatest spread and influence in Henry's reign. They found adherents not only in their traditional constituency among the crafts of the towns but, until persecution drove them underground, among the gentry and the knightly class, some of them men who were close to the court. Wider discontents were reflected in a growing nostalgia for an ill-remembered past. Movements to reinstate Richard II, or the various impostors claiming to be Richard II, attracted significant popular support which was easily manipulated by powerful sectional interests. Within two months of Henry's accession a large group of Ricardian diehards, including four earls and at least one bishop, all outwardly reconciled to the new regime, were plotting Richard's restoration in the back streets of London and the abbot's lodgings at Westminster. The 'Epiphany Rising' of January 1400 was a fiasco. Timed to coincide with a tournament at Windsor on Twelfth Night, it was betrayed before it was ready. The rebels were able to gather an armed force and capture Windsor but the King had already fled to safety in London and his adversaries were quickly dispersed. The ringleaders were lynched by mobs or summarily executed.[4]

They had moved too early in more senses than one. The misdeeds of Richard II were too recent. The mob which caught John Holand in Essex as he tried to flee to France took him to Pleshey castle and butchered him on the very spot where Richard had arrested the Duke of Gloucester in 1397. The rebels would have done better to wait until Henry IV had had time to make himself unpopular. As it was their folly cost them not only their own lives but Richard's. For medieval monarchies, with their perennial want of money, information and police powers, legitimacy was the prime instrument of government and no deposed king ever survived very long into the reign of his successor. Richard II was taken under armed guard to the Lancastrian castle of Pontefract in Yorkshire as

the rebellion was getting under way at the beginning of January 1400. He was dead within days of his arrival. The weight of the evidence is that he was starved to death by his jailers on the instructions of Henry IV. The council had Richard's body carried processionally to London in an open bier with his face exposed and lit by torches so that all would know that he was truly dead. Yet Richard's ghost continued to haunt them. The new regime was plagued for years by reports of his survival, which undermined the King's authority even among those who doubted them. 'I do not say that Richard lives,' said Roger Frisby, the friar of Leicester cross-examined by Henry IV in 1402, 'but if he lives he is the true King of England.'[5]

It was in this atmosphere of uncertainty and insecurity that Henry IV had to grapple with the mounting hostility of France. In January 1400 an English embassy left for France. Walter Skirlaw Bishop of Durham and Thomas Percy Earl of Worcester had been Richard II's foremost advisers on relations with France. They were veterans of these occasions and passed for gracious diplomats. They carried emollient instructions. Henry was keen to have the truce confirmed and to continue the reasonably equable relations with France which his predecessor had enjoyed. He even hoped to underpin them with a fresh royal marriage between his children and those of Charles VI or his uncles. There was no question of resurrecting the English dynasty's claim to the crown of France or the lost provinces of Aquitaine or the technical arguments about the effect of the treaty of Brétigny or any of the other old issues which had divided similar conferences before the treaty of 1396. Henry IV's objective was to survive and for that he needed peace.[6]

Nevertheless the negotiations were ill-starred from the outset. Skirlaw and Percy had originally intended to go before the French King and his council in Paris. But when they announced their arrival from Calais they received a glacial response from the French. Charles VI refused to receive them in audience and arrested the English herald who appeared in the French capital to obtain a safe-conduct. It was not until the end of January that he was persuaded to nominate ambassadors of his own, and they were to confer with their opposite numbers not in Paris but at Leulinghem, the modest mining village near Guînes whose thatched church had served as the venue for successive Anglo-French conferences over the past two decades. The nominal leader of the French embassy was Jean I de Montaigu Bishop of Chartres, brother of Charles VI's all-powerful minister. But its most active members were Jean de Hangest lord of Heuqueville, a plain-speaking soldier who had fought at Nicopolis, and Pierre Blanchet, a disputatious ecclesiastical lawyer whose

hectoring exhibitions of forensic oratory got up the noses of his interlocutors. The English diplomats quickly conceived a strong aversion for both of them. They sent a bleak report back to Westminster predicting war.[7] There was no war, but the atmosphere of suspicion and resentment persisted for years to come. Part of the problem lay with Henry himself. He was a cultivated man and perfectly at home in the world of European chivalry. But, unlike other prominent members of the English court nobility, he had had hardly any diplomatic experience before his accession. He proved to be an exceptionally unskilful negotiator: impulsive, changeable, irascible and unwilling to listen to advice. The French royal council was little better. Its policy varied with the movement of factions in Paris and the periodic 'absences' of Charles VI. Its choice of representatives at Leulinghem merely made a difficult situation worse.

Two issues poisoned the atmosphere. One was the revulsion of the French royal princes for the manner in which Henry IV had come to the throne. Some years afterwards Charles VI declared that he would have sent troops to England to support the Epiphany Rising if its leaders had only given him advance notice of their plans. This may have been rhetorical licence. But the fact that the news of Richard II's death reached France at about the same time as the ambassadors of his presumed murderer undoubtedly darkened the mood. For years after Henry's accession the French King declined to recognise the usurper's title. His government would not accept letters from Henry IV in which he called himself King of England and declined to receive his ambassadors on French soil in case that were to be regarded as an implicit recognition of his title. The French ambassadors at Leulinghem were of course authorised to talk to their English counterparts, but they were firmly instructed never to refer to Henry as King. Instead they were to employ circumlocutions like 'your lord' or 'the lord who sent you'. At best, if the English refused to negotiate on this basis, Charles would allow his representatives to call Henry his 'cousin'. The deposed King, if ever his name came up, was to be referred to as 'King Richard, your lord'. It is not clear whom the French government regarded as King of England if not Henry IV, but they may well have hoped that another English revolution would resolve their dilemma by sweeping the unwelcome Lancastrian away. This policy naturally infuriated the English government and made cordial relations practically impossible.[8]

In fact neither side wanted to repudiate the twenty-eight-year truce agreed in 1396. The English, weakened by bankruptcy and dissension at home, declared that the treaty of Paris was unaffected

by the change of monarch in England. It bound, they said, 'not just the kings but their kingdoms also'.[9] As a matter of law it was far from clear that they were right about this. Late medieval lawyers were uncertain about the corporate continuity of the state and tended to regard treaties as personal engagements between sovereigns. But as it happened it suited Charles VI's council to concede the point. It enabled them to maintain Richard II's truce in force without making a new agreement with his successor, something that would inevitably have involved acknowledging his title. To his dying day the Duke of Burgundy could not bring himself to have direct dealings with the regicide King of England. But he was fundamentally a man of peace, like his risk-averse brother the Duke of Berry. In spite of their outrage at the deposition of Richard II, in the last resort neither of them was willing to risk France's political and financial stability by reopening the war at a time when France's King was incapable of directing it. Their policy, reflected in successive instructions to their ambassadors at Leulinghem, was to make periodic declarations of their intention to honour the truce and to string out the negotiations for its confirmation and enforcement for as long as possible, while conducting a cold war against Henry IV personally.

The Duke of Orléans' position was more obscure. He had never thought well of the deal which the French government had done with Richard II in 1396. It had been Philip's deal, designed to protect Philip's interests. It was also associated in Louis' mind with the plan for a joint Anglo-French campaign in Italy against his father-in-law Gian Galeazzo Duke of Milan, an ill-thought out and ultimately abortive scheme which he naturally regarded as an indirect attack on himself. For this reason Louis had been a persistent opponent of England in the three years following the treaty of Paris. In the summer of 1399, when the future Henry IV was living in exile in Paris and the Dukes of Burgundy and Berry were doing their best to contain his intrigues against Richard II, it was natural for Louis of Orléans to ally himself covertly with Henry and offer active support for his invasion of England. According to Henry himself this had been Louis' idea, motivated mainly by resentment of his uncles. Quite what Louis had expected to achieve by supporting a Lancastrian coup in England is hard to say, but it is unlikely that he intended to put Henry on the throne. He must have been as surprised as everyone else in France when Richard II's cause collapsed like a house of cards. But Louis does not seem to have been as outraged as his uncles were. On the contrary his first instinct was to turn it to his advantage. He was represented at Henry IV's coronation at Westminster on 13 October 1399. In the

following summer one of his household knights, who was in England for a tournament, delivered a message assuring the new King of his continuing friendship but asking him to keep quiet about their agreement which he did not wish to see bruited about in France. Thereafter he continued to send Henry periodic messages of goodwill through English knights visiting France. The upshot was that Louis too favoured maintaining the truce with England, although for different and characteristically devious reasons of his own. After three months of difficult discussions at Leulinghem, punctuated by frequent adjournments, the ambassadors finally agreed upon a brief exchange of letters in which each of the two rulers independently declared his intention of observing the truce, but without formally renewing it or assuming any direct engagements to the other. When the English called on Charles VI to back his intention with an oath, they were told that the French King had already sworn an oath to Richard II and they would have to be satisfied with that.[10]

The other divisive issue ought to have been straightforward to resolve but proved to be a fertile source of ill-feeling. Richard II's deposition and imprisonment left his ten-year-old widow, Isabelle of France, stranded in an alien country with only a handful of friends and attendants for company. As soon as the deposed King's death was confirmed the French demanded her return, together with her personal trousseau of jewels and 200,000 francs of her cash dowry which was repayable under the terms of the treaty of Paris in the event that Richard died before she reached the age of twelve. Henry IV had no answer to these demands and was advised by the lawyers on his council that they were unanswerable. Like many difficult clients he looked for more congenial advice elsewhere. But his real problem was not the law, which was clear enough, but shortage of money. Henry could not afford to return Isabelle to France. Richard had spent most of her dowry and Henry himself had appropriated the rest. Many of her jewels had been distributed among Henry's children. In addition to these mercenary considerations there is some circumstantial evidence that as relations with France deteriorated Henry deliberately put off her return in order to deter aggressive French enterprises against Gascony or England itself.

For eighteen months after Richard II's death Henry IV parried the French government's demands. He tried to retain Isabelle and her money by proposing a variety of English husbands for the young widow, including his heir, Henry of Monmouth Prince of Wales. He claimed to set off his liability to restore her dowry against the 1,600,000 francs outstanding from the ransom promised for John II four decades before. The French were resolutely uninterested. They

had no desire for an alternative marriage alliance and firmly rejected the argument based on John's ransom. As well as sticking to their long-standing position that the ransom treaty had been repudiated by the English in the 1360s they pointed out that the dowry was Isabelle's personal property and could not be set off against a supposed liability of her father. Henry's ambassadors responded by playing for time. They called for the originals of the English undertakings of 1396 about the restitution of Isabelle and her dowry, as if there was some doubt about their authenticity. The French produced them but only when half of the English embassy had surrendered to be held in a nearby fortress as hostages for the documents' safe return, as if they thought that the English would deface or destroy them. When the English finally agreed in July 1400 to return Isabelle to her family they declared that they needed another six months in which to do it. By now firmly convinced of Henry's bad faith, the French royal council was afraid that he was planning to impose a husband on the vulnerable child.[11]

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By the summer of 1400 a fresh bone of contention had arisen as a result of Henry IV's deteriorating relations with Scotland. France's long-standing alliance with Scotland was a cornerstone of the foreign policy of both countries which neither was willing to abandon. But the political situation of the northern kingdom created almost as many difficulties for France as it did for England. The nominal ruler of Scotland was the affable but infirm and incapable Robert III. Writing in the 1440s the Scottish chronicler Walter Bower described his reign as a time of plenty, disfigured by 'dissension, strife and brawling'. By the turn of the new century Robert was king in name only. In January 1399 he had been elbowed aside by his family with the support of a coalition of prominent noblemen and officials. The general council of the realm met shortly afterwards at Perth. This body, which was assuming growing importance in Scotland, enjoyed a status somewhat similar to the English great council, exercising most of the political functions of the Scottish Parliament. It abrogated Robert's powers of government and transferred them to his eldest son the 21-year-old David Stewart Duke of Rothesay. Rothesay, 'a yonge prince pleyssande and mychty' according to a contemporary poet, was an able soldier and an adequate administrator who had played the leading part in his father's government for the past six years. He was now appointed as Lieutenant to govern in his place for another three. But he was never able to impose his authority. The terms of his appointment required him to exercise his functions under the

supervision of a special council of twenty-one ‘wyse men’. In practice this meant that his power was uneasily shared with the two powerful interest groups which dominated the special council. One group formed around the King’s ambitious and autocratic brother Robert Stewart, Earl of Fife and Duke of Albany, unquestionably the ablest member of his disfunctional family. In addition to being Chamberlain of Scotland and the Crown’s chief financial officer, Albany was the most powerful territorial magnate north of the Forth. The other group was associated with the Black Douglases, the dynasty founded by the Archibald ‘the Grim’, Earl of Douglas.

Now well into his seventies, Douglas was one of the more extraordinary figures of fourteenth-century Scotland. He was the dominant military leader on the Scottish borderlands and the leading protagonist of the guerilla war against England. In spite of his illegitimate birth he had succeeded by sheer intelligence, ruthlessness and force of personality in appropriating the earldom to himself together with most of its vast domains in southern Scotland, fighting off the claims of the ‘Red Douglases’ who represented the legitimate line.[12] In 1400, the last year of his life, Douglas completed his ascent by marrying his daughter to the Duke of Rothesay. This event marked a significant shift of power in the Scottish lowlands. The Douglases’ only significant rivals in the border region were the Dunbar Earls of March, the dominant territorial magnates in Lothian since the eleventh century. Rothesay had previously been betrothed to the daughter of George Dunbar Earl of March. The couple were already living together as man and wife. The Lieutenant’s new alliance therefore marked a complete breach with Dunbar. Dunbar fled to England, where he wrote a remarkable letter to Henry IV in his own hand (‘Marvel not that I write my letters in English for that is more clear to mine understanding than Latin or French’). He offered his services to the English King, declaring that he was ‘greatly wronged by the Duke of Rothesay, the which spoused my daughter and now, against his obliging to me made by his letter and his seal and against the law of holy Kirk, spouses another wife, as it is said’. In the following weeks his lands and castles in Scotland were seized. Douglas’s heir, Archibald Master of Douglas, took over the principal fortresses of the Earl of March in Lothian. He became captain for life of Edinburgh castle and shortly afterwards took over the formidable coastal castle of Dunbar together with much of the local following of the fugitive Earl. As for George Dunbar, he became a pensioner and partisan of the English and, fighting under their colours, would become one of the most effective military commanders of his time. The Black Douglases emerged all-powerful in southern Scotland.

They were henceforth in effective control of Scottish policy towards England.[13]

For a quarter of a century the Douglases had resisted any long-term accommodation with the English, even at times when Scotland's French allies were committed to one. The truce of Leulinghem of 1389 had been ratified by Robert II under strong French pressure and against the vocal objections of the border lords. Seven years later the same men successfully prevented Robert III from signing up to the peace of Paris of 1396. Instead a fragile truce was renewed from year to year. Successive 'march days' between representatives of the two realms were given over to debilitating argument about the frequent armed incursions across the border and to frustrating and unsuccessful efforts to persuade the Scots to agree to a permanent peace. The truth was that the border war had become a way of life, an economic necessity to which men had adapted themselves on both sides. Sparsely populated with few towns, only marginally cultivable, affected by persistent lawlessness and war damage, much of the Scottish border region was held under the distinctive Scottish system of feudal tenure in which service was at least as significant to the superior lord as rent. The border lords depended mainly on war for their livelihood. It was plunder that built their imposing stone houses, that bought their glittering armour and expensive warhorses, that drew them to the world of European chivalry. The Douglases, like other lords of the region, relied in their turn on extensive networks of dependants: kinsmen, tenants, friends and followers who looked to them for leadership and patronage and for opportunities which only war could provide. Nothing much had changed a century later when John Major wrote about the border region in which he had been brought up, a world in which farmers rented their land from their lords and 'keep a horse and weapons of war and are ready to take part in his quarrel with any powerful lord, be it just or unjust, if they only have a liking for him'.[14]

At the time of Henry IV's accession the current truce with Scotland had a year to run. One of Henry's first acts was to invite the Scots to confirm it. But the confusion in England was too good an opportunity for the Scots to pass by. Their response was a powerful raid across the east march into Northumberland resulting in the destruction of Wark castle and more than £2,000 worth of damage and ransoms. This was followed by another raid across the west march which penetrated as far as Penrith. Henry IV blamed the Douglases, with good reason. The Duke of Rothesay was eventually persuaded to agree to a conference. But he addressed Henry in his letters as Duke of Lancaster and Constable of England, not as King,

and insisted that the conference should be held on the old border with England which the English declined to recognise as the limit of their territory. It was an unpromising start. In November 1399 Henry announced in Parliament his intention to lead an army into Scotland in person. His object appears to have been to push the Scots into negotiating a peace. But if so he failed completely. There were no substantial discussions until July 1400 when, with Henry's army already assembling at York, the Scots finally came before him with an offer of peace. For all Henry's armed strength, however, they were not willing to concede much. The peace that they proposed was based on the terms of the old treaty of Northampton of 1328. This was the treaty in which Edward III had recognised the sovereignty of Scotland after the thirty-year war of independence and which he had then torn up in 1332. For years the English kings had tacitly acknowledged the independence of Scotland and the sovereignty of its kings. The formal recognition of these facts in 1400 would have been a realistic compromise and might even have been enough to undo the Scottish alliance with France. But it would have meant accepting the loss of all of Edward III's later conquests and surrendering the three castles of Berwick, Roxburgh and Jedburgh which remained in English hands. It was more than an insecure king in England could afford to concede.[15]

Henry IV took the field against Scotland in August 1400. On 6 August he issued letters from Newcastle calling upon Robert III to do homage to him. On the same day he marched north from Newcastle at the head of more than 13,000 men, one of the largest armies to be raised in England for more than a century. The English host entered Scotland on 14 August. But the Scots called the English King's bluff. They followed their traditional strategy of retreating in the face of the invader and refusing to give battle. Dunbar castle, which Henry had hoped to take over with the aid of the disaffected George Dunbar, was securely garrisoned against him by the Master of Douglas. Henry advanced unopposed to Edinburgh and occupied the town while Douglas and Rothesay held out in the castle high above the city. The English assaulted the walls for three days without success. Meanwhile their supplies began to run short, the perennial problem of large armies operating in Scotland. Towards the end of August representatives of the two sides met beneath a roadside cross between Edinburgh and Leith. The Scots offered 'empty words and fine promises' if the English army would leave Scotland. Their proposals seem to have amounted to little more than a promise to consider Henry IV's claim to the homage of Scotland. But with that Henry had to be content. On 29 August he returned with his army to England. The campaign had achieved nothing.

There had been little fighting, little plunder and not even much damage. Indeed the north of England was less secure after than before, for the brief campaign consolidated the power of the Black Douglases and led to the irretrievable breakdown of the system of march days and border courts by which the wardens of the march had maintained a semblance of peace for much of the past half century. Within six weeks of Henry's withdrawal the Scots were once again mounting large-scale raids into Northumberland. In November Douglas was riding at the head of his men into the eastern march burning and killing as far south as Bamburgh.[16]

The French government was an impotent spectator of these events. They had made contact with the Scottish court after Richard II's deposition through a Scottish master of the University of Paris. But subsequent attempts to concert policy against the new regime in England were frustrated by an English maritime blockade which prevented Charles VI's letters from getting through. At some stage the French learned of Henry IV's plan to invade Scotland. But they did nothing about it apart from insisting at the Leulinghem conferences that any formal renewal of the truce of 1396 would have to protect the Scots as well. In September 1400 a more determined attempt was made to re-establish contact. The French royal council decided to send an embassy to England comprising Jean de Hangest and Pierre Blanchet, the two men who had led the French delegation at Leulinghem. They were mainly concerned with the predicament of Isabelle of France. But they were to be accompanied by a separate embassy destined for Scotland, which was to travel overland to the northern kingdom as soon as the English could be persuaded to give them a safe-conduct. Its leading member was a Poitevin knight, Pierre des Essarts. Pierre and his colleagues were instructed to discuss the current situation with Rothesay, Albany and the border lords. They were to reassure the Scots of France's attachment to the old alliance in spite of the malicious stories that they were no doubt hearing from the English. It was true, they were to say, that Charles VI had not sent them help against the English invaders, but that was only because of the difficulty of communications across the North Sea. What, however, was notably absent from their instructions was any firm promise of help in future. It is obvious that Scotland was low among the priorities of Charles VI's council and that very little was known in Paris about Scottish and even English affairs.[17]

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Henry IV was at Northampton on his way south when the news was brought to him of a major rebellion in north Wales which was

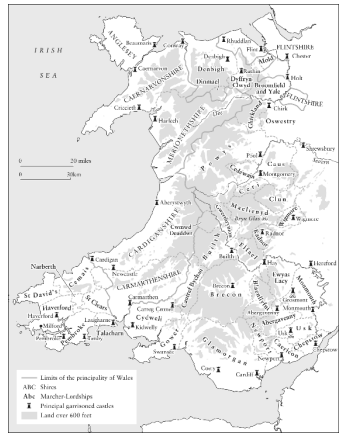
destined to have even more significant implications for the course of England's relations with France. On 16 September 1400 Owen Glendower had been proclaimed Prince of Wales at his manor at Glyndyfrdwy in eastern Merioneth in the presence of a large number of his kinsmen and friends. Two days later on the 18th they fell on the small town of Ruthin, which was full of people come for the annual St Matthew's Day fair, and burned it to the ground before going on to attack English settlements in Flintshire and Denbigh. They then invaded the English county of Shropshire. Meanwhile there was another rising in north Wales. Its leaders were Glendower's cousins the brothers William and Rhys ap Tudor, who came from the leading family of Anglesey and claimed descent from the last native princes of Wales.

Henry was alarmed. The opening of Parliament at Westminster was postponed. The sheriffs of the counties bordering on the Welsh march were ordered to raise all the men that they could find. The King announced his intention to make for the march himself with the remnants of the army of Scotland. In fact by the time Henry arrived on the Welsh march the immediate crisis was over. On 24 September 1400 Glendower and his men were cornered on the banks of the Severn near Welshpool and routed by the English county levies under the command of the Shropshire magnate Hugh Burnell. Glendower fled into the woods and mountains. His followers melted away. Henry reached Shrewsbury with his army on the 26th. Over the next three weeks he led a rapid punitive expedition through north Wales. The rebellion had been geographically contained and had lasted little more than a week. But it was taken extremely seriously in England. A number of the leading lights were dispossessed and some of them were executed. When Parliament met at Westminster in January 1401 the Commons received alarming reports of resurgent national feeling among the Welsh. Welsh scholars at Oxford and Welsh labourers working in England were reported to have armed themselves with bows, arrows and swords when they heard the news of Glendower's rising and slipped away to join him. Welshmen had rioted at Bristol and Frome. It was only a matter of time, the Commons thought, before the Welsh rose again. This was prescient, for Glendower proved to be an exceptionally resourceful and persistent opponent who would cripple Henry IV's government for much of the next decade.[18]

Owen Glendower was born by his own account in 1359, which would have made him about forty-one years old at the time of these events. His family, like many of his class and time, had a distinguished past but a modest present. He was descended from the

princes of northern Powys, who had been major landowners in the region of Wrexham before the Edwardian conquest of Wales reduced them to the status of minor local lords. But Glendower was no backwoodsman. He had inherited a small domain in Merioneth and another in the neighbouring lordship of Chirkland in the north, which made him a rich man by the standards of rural Wales. According to the chronicler Thomas Walsingham he had studied law at the Inns of Court in London. His wife was the daughter of a King's Bench judge. He had served in the English garrison of Berwick-on-Tweed in 1384 under the famous Welsh paladin Sir Digory Say and had fought in the army which invaded Scotland under Richard II in the following year. In 1387 he had served at sea as a squire in the military retinue of the Earl of Arundel. By the standards of his countrymen Glendower was a highly educated and anglicised Welshman.[19]

What provoked him to rebellion in September 1400 is impossible to know. It was generally believed at the time that he had fallen out with a powerful English neighbour Reginald lord Grey of Ruthin over a piece of land. Grey was close to Henry IV and was said to have traduced him to the King.[20] But by proclaiming himself as Prince of Wales Glendower was invoking grievances far more fundamental and widespread than any issue about boundaries between neighbouring landowners. Wales was a poor country, mountainous, sparsely populated with a mainly pastoral and woodland economy and a shortage of fertile arable land. Government was hindered by the perennial problems of mountain regions in medieval Europe: difficult communications, banditry and lawlessness, intense local solidarities and high levels of migration. These problems were aggravated by the country's complex administrative geography and dispersed centres of power. There were six royal shires in the west and north, five of them forming the principality of Wales proper and a sixth, Flintshire, which was attached to the English county of Chester. The rest, comprising rather more than half of the country and most of its population and fertile land, was divided between some forty marcher lordships controlled by major English noble families. Most of them owed their lands and status to royal grants dating back to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in return for defending them against the Welsh.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Denbigh

from the appointment of Englishmen to all the highest positions in the Welsh Church, which created a frustrated underclass of educated and half-educated Welsh clergymen with no prospects of advancement and every reason to share their frustrations with their flocks. Fragmented landholdings had generated a strong military culture. Welshmen served as professional soldiers not just in English armies but in the armies of France and in free companies operating across much of western Europe. Owen Lawgoch, a descendant of the last native princes of Wales who created the Welsh companies in the service of Charles V of France, had had an overtly nationalist agenda and many followers in his native country.

The English were well aware of the problems of Wales. Their officials in the principality had for many years been nervous about the threat of localised risings and from time to time violent incidents occurred to remind them of it. The danger of a wider revolt had been contained mainly by the fragmented character of Welsh society and by its difficult geography, which made national movements of rebellion hard to organise and sustain. But it had been contained also by a measure of sensitivity on the part of the agents of the English government and the leading territorial magnates. There had been judicious patronage of influential Welshmen and opportunities for well-paid service in the armies of the English kings. In the last three decades of the fourteenth century, however, conditions became harsher. The military opportunities declined with the steady retreat of English arms in France. The reduction in agricultural and pastoral incomes, a general phenomenon in late medieval Britain, was felt badly in Wales. The resulting tensions were aggravated by the panic which Owen Glendower's first rebellion provoked in England. In the Parliament of January 1401 the Commons bayed for action against 'entire Welshmen' and called for an end to recent moves towards greater integration of the races. The exclusion of Welshmen from Welsh towns was reinforced. Captains and garrisons in Wales were now to be drawn exclusively from Englishmen. No Welshman was to carry arms in towns, on the highway or in any public gathering. Even this was not enough for the marcher lords and other magnates gathered at a great council in March 1401. On their advice Henry IV ordained that no Welshman should henceforth hold any castle or defensible house, or serve in Wales as a judge, chamberlain, steward, receiver, forester, viscount, escheator or constable of any castle, that all 'congregations, conventicles and companies' of Welshmen should be banned, and that wandering Welsh minstrels, bards, rhymers and wasters and 'other vagabonds' should be imprisoned.[21]

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Jean de Hangest and Pierre Blanchet arrived in England on 5 October 1400 to find the country distracted by the crisis in Wales. The King was at Caernarvon and the ambassadors were received by the council in the church of the London Black Friars. When it became clear that the council had no instructions to deal with the release of Isabelle, the Frenchmen brought the discussions to an end and demanded an audience with Henry himself. The councillors, who had no desire to allow Charles VI's ambassadors to become acquainted with their difficulties in Wales, evaded the issue. But they did allow Jean de Hangest to meet Isabelle herself. The French government was mainly concerned about the possibility that Henry might impose an English husband on the child. There was some substance in their fears, for Isabelle confirmed when she was alone with the ambassador that several different suitors had been proposed to her. Hangest told her that any English marriage would be opposed by her father. She made it perfectly clear that she had no intention of agreeing to one and wanted nothing more than to return to France.

On 19 October 1400 Jean de Hangest was finally received by Henry himself in the great hall of Windsor castle. He was received alone for Pierre Blanchet was dead, poisoned so the French said, in fact probably the victim of the plague which was then raging in the English capital. The record made by one of Charles VI's secretaries graphically reveals the mutual antagonism and distrust between the two courts. The English King called for the ambassador's letters of accreditation, the indispensable preliminary to every diplomatic negotiation. Since the French royal council was unwilling to accredit the ambassadors to Henry as King of England they had sent him without any. Hangest told Henry that he would deliver his message orally. Henry replied that he would not hear him as ambassador without letters of accreditation but only as a private individual. Hangest said that he was not there as a private individual. If Henry persisted in this line he would return at once to France. The ambassador withdrew to a side room while Henry considered this answer with his council. In the interval the Bishop of Durham and the Earl of Worcester approached him and asked: 'Where are the powers that you have brought from your master?' 'Up my sleeve,' replied the ambassador. They asked to see them. Hangest refused. He said that Henry had obviously taken against him and if he saw his instructions he would know what he was about to say and decline to hear him out. So he would address Henry orally first. Faced with this impasse and unwilling to see

negotiations broken off, Henry backed down. Hangest was allowed to speak his piece. He reminded Henry that Charles VI had been pressing for the return of his daughter since February. It was time that Henry complied. The French government expected her to be returned by 1 November. There could be no greater point of honour between knights, he tartly remarked, than to keep their promises. At the conclusion of the ambassador's speech Henry rose and withdrew to his chamber where in due course Hangest was invited to join him for dinner. It must have been an awkward meal. When it was over there was another formal audience at which the Earl of Worcester delivered the King's response. Isabelle, he confirmed, would be returned to her family. But Henry would not commit himself to a date and declared that he would retain her dowry as an instalment of John II's ransom.

Before he left Windsor the ambassador was allowed to speak again to Isabelle, who was lodged in another part of the castle. It was an emotional meeting. Isabelle had an unenviable fate. She had spent three years in England married to a man old enough to be her father, from whom she had received nothing but kindness and consideration, followed by a year of honourable captivity at the hands of the man who had imprisoned and then murdered him. She may have been a child but she was intelligent enough to realise that she had become a political pawn, a bargaining chip in a larger game. She broke down in tears, fell into the ambassador's arms and kissed him, begging him to tell her father to get her out of England as soon as possible.[22]

Charles VI's ambassadors to the Scots had accompanied Jean de Hangest to London, but for some months they were unable to proceed on their mission for want of an English safe-conduct. Henry's ministers were conducting their own negotiations with the Scots and had tactical reasons for detaining them in the south. A brief and fragile truce was agreed at the border abbey of Kelso shortly before Christmas 1400 to allow time to negotiate a more substantial deal. But by the time that these negotiations occurred the political situation in Scotland had changed. England's long-standing nemesis Archibald the Grim, Earl of Douglas, died on Christmas Eve 1400, a few days after the truce of Kelso. His role passed to his son Archibald, the fourth Earl, an ambitious politician and an aggressive warrior but a man of famously poor judgment who became known as 'the Tyneman' ('loser' in old Scots). The new Earl almost immediately fell out with the Duke of Rothesay. The reasons for their estrangement are obscure but seem to have been connected with the disgrace of the Earl of March. The two men had cooperated in his destruction and Rothesay had expected to receive

the lion's share of the spoils. In fact Douglas appropriated almost all of them. Differences about relations with England widened the breach. Douglas stuck to his father's policy of opposing all long-term agreements with the English. He was supported in this by 'all the young lords' of the border. But Rothesay was wary of Douglas's power on the border and reluctant to increase it by embarking on another war with England. He secured the support or at least the acquiescence of most of the council of 'wyse men' who had been placed over him at the time of his appointment, including his uncle the Duke of Albany.

A conference with the English was eventually fixed for 25 April 1401. By this time the French ambassadors had at last managed to leave London and were reported to be on their way north. They were bound to oppose any attempt to agree a permanent peace and were likely to make common cause with the border lords. So Rothesay and Albany suggested a quick deal to the Earl of Northumberland, before the French arrived. Unfortunately the English were not nimble enough to take advantage of the opportunity. Northumberland had to send to London for instructions. By the time that the instructions arrived the French ambassadors had appeared. Moreover when the instructions were opened they proved to be extremely intransigent. Northumberland was to insist that any permanent peace should acknowledge England's overlordship over the Scottish kingdom, something which no Scottish government, however weak, was likely to accept. A team of Chancery clerks of outstanding learning was sent north with satchels full of documents to impress upon the Scots the justice of Henry's claim. The result of all this advocacy was that nothing was agreed apart from a short extension of the existing truce until November 1401 and an indistinct promise that it would be extended for another year after that.[23]

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The truce with Scotland was providential, for the English were coming under strong pressure in Wales. The task of holding down Wales nominally rested with the King's eldest son, the thirteen-year-old Henry of Monmouth, who had been made Prince of Wales on his father's accession. Real power, however, was exercised in his name by a council sitting at Chester, dominated by the Earl of Northumberland's eldest son Henry Percy ('Hotspur'). Hotspur combined the wardenship of the west march of Scotland with the office of Justiciar of Chester and north Wales and the custody of most of the principal royal fortresses of north Wales. He and his father were shrewd politicians with good contacts among the Welsh.

They knew that the programme of repression and revenge following Glendower's first rebellion was provoking a dangerous backlash there. They had misgivings about the King's obdurate line. Hotspur had done what he could to conciliate the Welsh. He had procured pardons for all the leaders of the original rebellion apart from Glendower and the Tudor brothers. He resisted the pressure from Westminster to enforce the recent Parliamentary ordinances against the native Welsh, informing Henry's ministers that he would apply them 'as I think best'.[24] Unfortunately it was already too late for that. On 1 April 1401 William and Rhys ap Tudor appeared outside Conway castle on the north coast with just forty men, forced the gate and took over the fortress while the garrison was at church. They then fought off the army of Hotspur and the Prince of Wales from the walls for the best part of three months. In May, while the Tudors were still holding out at Conway, Glendower reappeared in south Wales with a band of about 120 'reckless men and robbers'. On the banks of the River Hyddgen beneath the Plynlimon mountain range, he wiped out a much larger force of English soldiers and settlers from Pembrokeshire which had been sent to confront him.[25]

Henry IV was at Wallingford when the news was brought to him. He made straight for the Welsh march, summoning troops to meet him at Worcester. Hotspur launched a parallel raid through north Wales, marching from Denbigh to the foot of Cader Idris at the end of May with a fleet of victualling ships following him round the coast. John Charlton, the lord of Powys, arrived shortly afterwards with reinforcements including 400 archers. He actually located the rebels' encampment and captured several of their men together with some trophies. But Glendower himself slipped away. Henry IV arrived at Worcester on 5 June to be told that the crisis had passed and no longer required his personal attention.

In fact the crisis had not passed. On the contrary the rebellion was gathering momentum. From his hiding place Glendower issued summonses to prominent men across Wales calling upon them to join him if they valued their honour and liberty. Fighting men from every part of the country came to his standard. From their mountain refuges in Snowdonia, Glendower's raiding parties descended without warning on English settlements. Buildings were burned. Lone travellers were killed. Horses and equipment were carried off. English officials were assassinated. Harlech was besieged and Caernarvon threatened. Within three months Glendower's supporters were said to be in possession of most of northern, western and central Wales except for castles and walled towns. The English still retained control in the north-east of the country, which

was heavily settled and castled. They also maintained a faltering grip on the more prosperous southern counties. But even here tensions were high. There had been some notable defections. Welsh tenants were reported to be withholding their rents and dues in anticipation of a major insurrection.

In October 1401 Henry IV mustered his army at Worcester and led it down the Tywi valley into south Wales in an intimidating show of force. Glendower's known supporters were dispossessed. One of the richest landowners of the region was drawn, hanged and quartered together with his eldest son in the King's presence at Llandovery. But for all its ferocity, the campaign made no impression on Glendower's support. After Henry had returned to England Glendower sent messages to the Earl of Northumberland deploring the destruction which the war had brought to Wales and suggesting talks. The Percies took a more realistic view of the situation than Henry IV and his ministers. They thought that Glendower's offer should be taken seriously and suggested that he might be bought off cheaply with the restoration of his forfeited estates. Whether they were right about this cannot be known for the proposal fell on deaf ears at Westminster. In the following winter Glendower would address rhetorical appeals for military support to the King of Scotland and the Gaelic chiefs of Ireland, citing ancient prophecies of national liberation from the 'bondage' imposed on them by England. A great struggle had begun against the common enemy, he told them.[26]

From the outset the war in Wales took on the character that it would retain for a decade. It pitted the relatively organised Plantagenet administration against guerilla forces which could rarely be pinned down or confronted in the open. The fighting was episodic and geographically dispersed, with little strategic coherence and few signs of central direction, a pattern which was at once the strength and weakness of the revolt. The leaders, like Glendower and the Tudors, were experienced soldiers who had fought in English armies in France and in Scotland and Ireland. The same was true of many of their followers, especially the archers who had for decades been recruited in Wales for service in the armies of Edward III and Richard II. But Glendower could never have fought in Wales the kind of campaigns that his men were used to fighting under English command. Only occasionally, at the high points of Glendower's adventure, did the disparate and scattered Welsh forces coalesce to form substantial armies, up to 8,000 strong according to English estimates. Their operations tended to be concentrated in the summer and autumn months, when the rivers were lower and the high valleys passable and when they could live

on the land far from their homes. They depended on surprise, on traps and ambushes, and on rapid movements over considerable distances. They descended without warning on the English settlements of the coast or on the thinly escorted cortèges of officials making their way with orders, reports and cash along the coast road or through the wooded valleys of the interior. They appeared from nowhere to burn crops, mills and farm buildings. Cash was scarce in Wales and ransoms and protection money provided an indispensable source of funding. Cattle rustling fed the isolated groups of Welsh as they hid in the barren hills. Success and pillage attracted recruits in thousands to Glendower's cause and kept them fed and supplied, while defeat and loss could disperse his forces and depress their morale and their numbers for months.

The English, like their Welsh opponents, also depended mainly on local initiatives. Their defence was based on the impressive network of coastal fortresses constructed by Edward I in north and west Wales a century before and on the castles of the marcher lords, which extended the length of the border with England from Chester to Chepstow and along the south coast. With their limited staying power and lack of ships and artillery, the Welsh were rarely able to take these places. The English could not afford to barricade themselves behind their walls and abandon the open country to Glendower. Yet their operations in open country tended to be slow, incoherent and ineffective. The Welsh dispersed into the hills after every raid with their prisoners and booty before heavier English forces could reach the scene. After every major English reverse armies of three or four thousand heavily armed mounted troops would be summoned from the midland and western counties of England to Chester, Hereford, Shrewsbury or Worcester. They had to be supplied from England by sea or overland by lumbering and heavily guarded wagon-trains. They were usually condemned to beat the air as they made their way along the highland valleys and ridges and the enemy vanished before them. Few of these large-scale campaigns lasted as long as a month or had any lasting impact.

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Henry IV's difficulties on his British frontiers had a common background. They were symptomatic of the diminished authority of the Crown and its strained financial resources, two problems that were closely connected. The new King owed many political debts to supporters who had helped to put him on the throne and to friends of Richard II whom he could not afford to alienate. These obligations locked him into an extremely demanding pattern of

expenditure. He was obliged to maintain a large and expensive household at a cost not far short of Richard's magnificent establishment. He had to make substantial grants to people on whose support or indifference the stability of his government depended. In the first two years of his reign he granted or confirmed cash annuities worth some £24,000 in addition to lavish grants of land. This accounted for more than a quarter of his entire revenues for the year.[27]

To meet this burden on top of the cost of defending Calais, Guyenne, Ireland and the Scottish march, and mounting annual campaigns in Wales, Henry depended on a shrinking revenue base. The once substantial income drawn by the Crown from Wales was virtually extinguished by the revolt of Owen Glendower, and the destruction occasioned by Welsh raids reduced the tax yield from the adjoining counties of England. The revenues of the King's personal domain as Duke of Lancaster also suffered badly. By far the largest source of revenue enjoyed by the English Crown was the customs, including the various export duties on wool and pelts, the import duties on wine and the general impost on foreign trade known as tunnage and poundage. These revenues, although still strictly speaking dependent on regular Parliamentary grants, had in practice been permanent since the 1360s and some of them for much longer. They suffered, however, not only from recession but from the persistent rise of the domestic English cloth industry, which generated very little revenue for the Crown and consumed much of the wool that would otherwise have been exported. Henry's customs revenues ran at an average of some £35,000 a year, which was well below the average for the previous reign and only a third of what these revenues had contributed to the war chests of Edward III in their heyday half a century before.[28]

All of this meant that Henry's need of Parliamentary taxation was even greater than his predecessors'. Parliamentary subsidies carried a high political cost. At his accession the King had declared that he would ask for no subsidies 'unless it be for pressing needs of war or unavoidable necessity'. The half-subsidy still outstanding from Richard II's last Parliamentary grant was cancelled. This was probably politically unavoidable but it had dire consequences for Henry's government. In the first five years of his reign there were only two Parliamentary subsidies, in 1401 and 1402, plus a one-off land tax of £12,000 (worth about a third of a Parliamentary subsidy) which was granted with extreme reluctance on terms that it should not be a precedent and that no record should be kept of it. There were some expenses for which the Commons never accepted responsibility, such as the ordinary costs of the King's household

and administration, which they expected to see paid from his own resources. From time to time it was even suggested that the prodigious cost of suppressing the rebellion in Wales, which was outside Parliament's jurisdiction, should be funded without recourse to Parliamentary taxation, from forfeitures and from the Welsh estates of the Crown and the marcher lords.[29]

The Parliament which met at Westminster in January 1401 was an occasion for taking stock. The King had been on the throne for sixteen months and his coffers were empty. The Treasurer prepared a budget in which the King's needs were estimated at £130,900 a year. Of this sum £37,000 was earmarked for the costs of defence: £13,320 for Calais, £5,333 for Ireland, £10,000 for Gascony and some £8,400 for the march of Scotland and the keeping of the sea. In addition £16,000 was budgeted for the repayment of loans raised, mostly for military expenditure, in the previous year. Parliament responded with a standard subsidy worth £36,000 in two instalments. But even with this welcome infusion of tax money Henry's revenues for the year amounted to no more than £103,200. If the Treasurer's estimates had been right, they implied that the King was able to fund only about 80 per cent of his needs even with the assistance of a Parliamentary grant. In fact the figures for the King's expenditure were a considerable under-estimate. Only about half of the cost of the royal household had been included. The cost of defending the Scottish march and the English Channel proved to be greater than expected and no provision at all had been made for holding Wales at a time when the eight royal garrisons of north Wales were alone costing nearly £6,000 a year.[30]

Calais was another persistent financial headache. Its importance was undeniable. As its captain, the King's half-brother John Beaufort Earl of Somerset, observed in 1404, Calais was 'a source of great honour, benefit and profit to your realm of England and of insecurity, shame and trouble to your enemies'. It was the home of a large English colony and a major military base. It was a bridgehead into France, a centre for diplomacy and intelligence-gathering, and a commercial port with an important mint. It had been the obligatory route for English wool exports for most of the past forty years. At an average of £18,000 even in time of truce the annual cost of defending it was by far the largest recurring item in the government's accounts and substantially more than the Treasurer's estimate. About half the cost was funded from the export duties collected in five major English ports which were assigned to the Treasurer of Calais. The effect of these assignments was to reserve a large proportion of the government's main source of regular revenue to the cost of defending England's major strategic asset in

France. But the system inevitably aggravated the problem of funding other calls on the King's purse. Moreover, although it produced enough cash to pay for the peacetime establishment of Calais, it was not equal to the cost of maintaining the town on a war footing. In the first three and a half years of Henry's reign the government accumulated nearly £17,000 in debts on the town's account, most of it owed to the Earl of Somerset. Concern about mutiny, desertion or treachery among the garrison was a perennial theme of discussion at Westminster.[31]

Persistent deficits forced the English King's ministers to resort to a succession of short-term financial expedients. Some £14,600 in French crowns from the dowry of Richard II's widow was found in the ex-King's coffers and appropriated at the end of 1399. Land forfeited from the leading rebels of January 1400 was applied to the burgeoning cost of the King's household. The great host which invaded Scotland in the summer of 1400 was funded partly by persuading some important noblemen to serve at their own expense and partly by borrowing from prominent officials and London merchants. There was a heavy forced loan in 1402 to meet the unforeseen burden of the Welsh rising and regular borrowing thereafter from London financiers and the big Italian trading houses, generally for short terms and at high rates of interest. But the principal expedient of bankrupt governments has always been default, and so it was with Henry IV. His ministers staggered from one financial crisis to the next, ground between the upper and nether millstones of rising expenditure and falling income and leaving a trail of bad debts behind them. In May 1401 Hotspur threatened to abandon the fighting in Wales unless his arrears were paid. Two months later he complained that no proper provision had been made for the £5,000 a year due to him and his father for defending the march of Scotland. They had been serving on credit since their appointment and could no longer hold their troops together. From Ireland the King's councillors reported that his second son, the fourteen-year-old Thomas of Lancaster who had been sent out as the figurehead Lieutenant, was 'so destitute that he does not have a penny in the world, nor can he borrow, since he has pledged all his jewels and plate apart from what he needs for daily use'. His soldiers had deserted him and his personal household would shortly follow their example. Their experience was all too common. Exchequer tallies, which were essentially cheques drawn on local revenue collectors in favour of the King's creditors, were dishonoured at an average rate of more than £10,000 a year. Most creditors did not even get tallies.[32]

In the first year of the new reign the London poet and moralist

John Gower, now old and almost blind, addressed an appeal for peace with France to the new king. It was probably his last work. Gower paid lip-service to the English claim to the crown of France and the recovery of the conquered provinces of the south-west. But he placed the pursuit of peace, 'the chief of all the world's wealth', above everything:

> The more he myghte our dedly werre cease,
> The more he shulde his worthinesse encresse.

These were more than conventional sentiments. Gower was close to the house of Lancaster. He had 'worn the rayed sleve' of a court official. His works were widely read. And his views resembled those of other poets from the same world: the courtier and diplomat Geoffrey Chaucer, the soldier Sir John Clanvowe, the long-serving Privy Seal clerk Thomas Hoccleve. Their streak of introspective pacifism seems to have been shared by many, perhaps most politically active, well-born Englishmen of the period. England was suffering like the rest of western Europe from plague, recession and tax exhaustion. The Parliamentary Commons continued to vote periodic subsidies for the defence of England but they showed little appetite for funding Continental campaigns.[33]

England at the turn of the early fifteenth century had become, if not a more peaceable society, then certainly a less military one. The old warlike culture still survived in Cheshire, kept alive by the rebellion in Wales. It survived too in the brutal wasteland of the Scottish march where it was an essential condition of survival. Elsewhere the difficulties which English captains had for years encountered in recruiting trained men-at-arms were symptomatic of a general disenchantment with fighting among the gentry of the counties. There had been no major English campaign on the Continent for nearly twenty years. Opportunities for garrison service had dwindled with the progressive expulsion of the English from their strongholds north of the Dordogne followed by the abandonment of Cherbourg and Brest and the elimination of the free companies of Auvergne and Limousin. With the growing professionalisation of warfare, fighting had become the business of a small, elite corps of military contractors and full-time soldiers. Their political influence was limited and their numbers in rapid decline. The number of belted knights fell by about two-thirds between 1389 and 1410. Even families with the necessary wealth and status and a long tradition of military service behind them were no longer willing to be dubbed as knights or indeed to serve at all. 'For vain honour or for the worlde's good, they that whilom the stronge werrës made, where be they now?' asked Gower. Elderly

professional soldiers were giving up and returning home to live on their lands, invest their profits if they had any and comfort their souls by endowing chantry chapels. The few who were still in their prime found service far away. The Cheshire squire John Carrington, who fled to Italy after participating in the abortive rising of the earls at the beginning of 1400, found many Englishmen and Gascons serving in the armies of the despot of Milan 'that thither comen weren in hope of sallerye'. But most of these men must have returned home penniless like Carrington himself rather than face a life of 'thrall and wante' in search of casual military employment under transient masters.[34]

A generation earlier the witness lists in the famous case of *Scrope* v. *Grosvenor* about the right to wear the arms *azur a bend or* had been filled with veterans of the famous campaigns of Edward III and the Black Prince. When *Grey* v. *Hastings* was heard in the Court of Chivalry in 1409–10 the witnesses who claimed to have seen the protagonists wearing the disputed arms were a far more miscellaneous group. Even among those who identified themselves as gentlemen few gave evidence of any significant military experience and most of those were older men who had served in the inglorious campaigns of Edward's dotage and the reign of Richard II. Several made a point of saying that they had never borne arms in war. They lived in the country on their rents or they practised in London at the bar. The expense, risk and poor rewards associated with military service had put off many men of their kind, while those who had persevered found that the prestige of the soldier's life was not what it had been. 'O fickle world, Alas thy variance,' sang Hoccleve:

> How many a gentleman may men now see,
> that whilom in the warrës old of France,
> honoured were and holde in grete cheer
> for their prowess in arms, and plenty
> of friends had in youth, and now for shame,
> Alas, their friendship is croked and lame.[35]

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In the spring and summer of 1401, with Scotland on a knife-edge and Henry IV's lieutenants fully stretched trying to contain the spreading rebellion in Wales, relations with France sank to a new low. Stung by Jean de Hangest's remark about honour between knights Henry had taken the ambassador's hand as they parted and assured him 'as a knight and a king' that Isabelle would be returned. No doubt he meant it at the time. But he shortly revised his plans. On 14 January 1401 Charles VI had conferred the duchy of

Guyenne on Louis, the new Dauphin of France. The most likely explanation for this largely symbolic gesture was that the Duke of Burgundy wanted to ensure that if the English duchy collapsed Guyenne did not fall into the hands of Louis of Orléans. There is certainly no evidence at this stage that the French were planning a campaign in the south-west. But Henry IV, ever sensitive to any slight against his status, was outraged. The news reached England within a week of the decision in Paris, and when Parliament assembled in the Painted Chamber at Westminster on 21 January 1401 it was told that the King regarded the grant as a declaration of war. Walter Skirlaw and Henry Percy were sent back to Leulinghem with instructions to trade Isabelle's return for peace on the marches of Gascony and Calais.[36]

At the end of May 1401 a formal agreement was drawn up and sealed at Leulinghem in which Isabelle's return to France was promised for July. But having authorised this deal Henry declined to perform it until progress was made on getting a formal commitment from the French to respect the terms of the treaty of Paris. It was crude blackmail. The French ambassadors at Leulinghem refused to submit. They insisted that Isabelle would have to be released first. As the talks dragged on Henry IV lost his temper and began to lose touch with reality. At about the end of June he told his council that he proposed to mount major military campaigns against both France and Scotland. The councillors were divided. Some of them were aghast. The King could not afford it. The Treasurer reported that most of the Parliamentary subsidy voted earlier in the year had been assigned away to pay old debts. The coffers were empty. Henry refused to see reason. He resolved to put his plan to a great council. The entire Parliamentary peerage together with four to eight knights from every county were called to Westminster in the middle of August although it was harvest time and the Treasurer did not even have the cash to pay the messengers who were to carry the summonses. They declared themselves completely opposed to the King's plans and no attempt was made to put them into effect.[37]

By this time the crisis had passed. The French, who had every intention of respecting the truce, eventually agreed to say so. So Isabelle crossed the Channel with Thomas Percy and landed at Boulogne on 31 July 1401. Even in his bankrupt state Henry's dignity required him to provide a suitably impressive suite of attendants. The show cost him more than £8,000, equivalent to a minor military campaign. But the elaborately choreographed procedure was redolent of mutual suspicion and distrust. The princess was on French territory at Boulogne but remained formally

in the custody of Henry IV's representatives while her jewels were carefully inventoried and checked by French officials at Calais. At a prearranged moment a few miles away at Leulinghem the ambassadors of England and France put their seals to an indenture recording the arrangements for maintaining the peace on the marches. Joint commissions were appointed to enforce the truce and arrange redress for past breaches. Letters of marque authorising reprisals at sea were revoked. The merchants of both sides were promised free passage for themselves and their goods. When all this had been done Isabelle was escorted to English territory at Calais and then to Leulinghem. There she was formally handed over to the Count of Saint-Pol as governor of Artois in a great tented pavilion erected over the boundary line outside the church. Isabelle wept. Copious tears were shed by her companions and even by her English guardians. She was then escorted back to Paris by the French royal princes, surrounded by a great cavalcade of liveried horsemen. Honour was saved but goodwill was not. Isabelle had been returned with ill grace, with the jewels and chattels that she had brought with her to England but without the various gifts that she had received from her husband in his lifetime. The 200,000 francs due to her by way of repayment of her dowry remained outstanding, a bone of contention at diplomatic conferences for years to come. The whole affair had illustrated all the English King's worst qualities as a politician and a diplomat and had immeasurably strengthened the hand of those on the French King's council who hoped to take advantage of England's current weakness to reopen the war.[38]

By now the foremost of these was the Duke of Orléans. Louis' evolution from covert ally of the new King of England to declared enemy occurred gradually in the course of 1401 and 1402. The first reliable evidence of it is to be found in the terms of his alliance with the Duke of Guelders in the spring of 1401, which recorded that it was directed against 'the King's adversaries of England'. Louis' emergence as an advocate of war with England was due in large measure to Philip of Burgundy's determination to avoid one. France's policy towards England was another stick with which to beat his uncle, very much as relations with the papacy and Germany had been for years. But there was more to it than that. Fear of English arms was useful to the Duke of Orléans. Not only did it undermine the political position of his uncles. It justified the high levels of taxation on which Louis depended to feed his growing appetite for money, land and influence. England was widely perceived as both hostile and weak. By establishing himself as a successful war leader the Duke of Orléans could hope to secure his political position at the heart of the French state and build up his

personal following among the military nobility. His ambitions suited the mood of the moment better than the more cautious attitude of the Dukes of Burgundy and Berry. A younger generation of French noblemen was becoming impatient with the peace, which deprived them of adventure, status and rewards at a time when plague and recession had sharply reduced the profits of their domains. In the winter of 1401–2, after seeing off the Duke of Burgundy's attempt to confront him by force in the streets of Paris, Louis of Orléans began to shift French policy decisively in the direction of war.

The catalyst was provided by events in Scotland. In the autumn of 1401 the Duke of Rothesay was removed from power. Like much else in Scotland's history in this period the circumstances are obscure. Rothesay was said by his enemies to have acquired frivolous ways. But the real reasons for his fall were his assertive style of government, which eroded the power of his uncle Robert Stewart Duke of Albany; and his designs on the Scottish earldom of March, which threatened the pre-eminence of his brother-in-law the Earl of Douglas on the border. Between them Albany and Douglas and their allies controlled the council of 'wyse men' set over Rothesay by the Scottish general council. They made common cause against him. The 'wyse men' declared that they could no longer control Rothesay's acts. They went before the feeble King and resigned in a body. Then they bullied him into authorising his son's arrest. Rothesay, who suspected nothing, was captured on the road near St Andrews as he travelled through Fife. He was held in the bishop's castle there while Albany and Douglas and their confederates met in the nearby town of Culross to decide what to do with him. They resolved to shut him in the keep of Albany's castle at Falkland. Rothesay was never seen in public again. He died in his cell at Falkland on about 26 March 1402 and was hastily buried in the nearby abbey of Lindores. It was widely reported that he had been starved to death on Albany's orders. By this time Albany had already taken over as Lieutenant. In May the Scottish Parliament conducted a perfunctory inquiry. Albany and Douglas and their followers were formally exonerated. Their reasons for arresting Rothesay were ordered to be omitted from the record and the late Lieutenant was declared to have died 'by divine providence and not otherwise'. Albany's assumption of power was tacitly ratified.[39]

Albany's coup was followed by a more aggressive policy towards England. This was probably the price of Douglas's support. A conference between the English and Scottish wardens of the march opened on 17 October 1401 in the fields by the border east of Kelso abbey. The change of atmosphere became apparent at once. Rothesay, who had attended such occasions in the past, was absent.

Instead the Scottish delegation was led by the Earl of Douglas and filled with his clients and supporters. Henry IV's ambassadors dutifully recited his claims to the sovereignty of Scotland, supporting them with all the old legal and historical arguments going back to the wars of Troy and the time of Eli and Samuel. These were summarily rejected by the Scots. The conference then adjourned to the church of Carham on the English side of the Tweed to discuss the extension of the truce which was the real business of the conference. But Douglas did not want a truce. He wanted war. When the English arrived at Carham they found that he had brought an intimidating army which was standing, armed and arrayed for battle, on the other side of the river. The whole day was taken up with an acrimonious argument between Douglas and the Earl of Northumberland about the terms of the truce which they had provisionally agreed in a happier moment back in May. On the following day Douglas remained with his troops while his fellow commissioners turned up at Carham and rejected every English proposal one after the other. The conference broke up amid windy protests and undiplomatic abuse. The Scots would not even extend the truce until Christmas to allow the English to obtain further instructions from Westminster. Three weeks later, when the truce expired, Douglas led his army into Northumberland accompanied by several of his fellow commissioners and a large force of borderers. They penetrated south as far as Bamburgh and burned the town under the noses of the English garrison in the castle.[40]

The new regime in Scotland now embarked upon open war with England. The Duke of Albany set the tone of Scottish policy by taking up the claims of an impostor by the name of Thomas Ward of Trumpington, who claimed to be Richard II. Ward, who bore a remarkable resemblance to the late King, was an Englishman who is said to have been found working in the kitchens of Donald Lord of the Isles early in 1402. An elaborate story was concocted about his escape from Pontefract with the aid of three priests and a servant of the jailer to explain his presence there. Ward seems to have been a simple fellow like most of those who have impersonated murdered rulers through the ages, a tool in the hands of cleverer men and a figurehead for plots hatched in England. But his claims were intended mainly for consumption in France. Towards the end of the year David Lindsay Earl of Crawford, an ally of the Duke of Albany who had been implicated in Rothesay's fall, travelled to France with an appeal for French military support and tidings of the reborn Richard. The French royal council discussed the issue several times over the next few months. They decided to send an embassy to Scotland to investigate the facts and discuss joint action with the

Scottish leaders. The identity of the ambassadors is not known, but their entourage included two men who had known the real Richard well. One was Jean Creton, the French author of a metrical history of the fall of Richard II who had been with him at Conway castle in his last weeks of liberty. The other was William Serle, an Englishman living at the French court who had been the deposed King's chamber squire and was one of the executors of his will. Neither of them was taken in by Ward. Creton in due course reported to the French government that he was a fraud. But Serle stayed in Scotland and became his chief controller and promoter. He forged Richard II's signet and sent letters in his name to a large number of sympathisers in England, promising to come south to lead them against the usurper with the support of French and Scottish troops. Judging by the repeated denunciations from throne and pulpit the English government took the threat seriously. It caused 'unceasing murmuring, rebellion and dissension' in the country, according to the indictment preferred years later against one of those responsible. Many were taken in by Serle's forgeries including some, like the Countess of Oxford and Richard's bastard half-brother Sir Roger Clarendon, who had been the dead man's intimates.[41]

The Duke of Orléans had probably never believed the story about Richard II's survival and did not wait for Creton to report. At the beginning of January 1402 he entered into a personal alliance with the Earl of Crawford, who accepted a retainer of 1,000 *livres* a year from him. In March a fleet of ships was put at Crawford's disposal at Harfleur at the mouth of the Seine. These ships were nominally in Scottish service and a small contingent of Scots was placed on board each of them to give colour to French claims to be observing the truce. But the ships actually came from the ports of Normandy, and most of the seamen and soldiers on board were French. As soon as the winter gales had subsided Crawford embarked on a campaign of commerce raiding against English shipping along the entire Atlantic seaboard from Corunna to Sluys. His activities provoked a savage war of seizure and reprisal. Between April and June 1402 at least thirty-three English merchant ships were captured at sea, the great majority of them by Crawford's fleet. These were serious losses, about a tenth of England's ocean-going merchant fleet. Henry IV's ministers received prompt and accurate reports of Crawford's activities from spies and shipmasters. They complained bitterly to the French conservators of the truce. They were brushed aside with bland statements that the Scots were conducting their own war. The English did not believe them. They responded with a campaign of reprisals which proved to be highly effective. English shipowners

from Southampton, Poole, Dartmouth and Fowey were commissioned to fit out privateering fleets for operations in the Channel. By June they had taken forty-eight French merchantmen as prize of war in addition to some thirty Dutch, German and Castilian vessels trading to Scotland or believed to be carrying French cargoes. The three-month naval war marked the final breakdown of the treaty of Paris.[42]

For the time being Louis of Orléans' hands were tied by the determination of Charles VI's council to avoid formally repudiating the treaty. But he was able to indulge in a variety of gestures which served to express French hostility to Henry IV personally without bringing the two countries to open war. The decade following the treaty of 1396 was the great age of challenges, duels and tournaments between English and French champions, mock wars in which real hostility lay only just below the surface. These demonstrations became commoner as relations between the two countries deteriorated. Most of them emanated from the household of the Duke of Orléans. In May 1402 Louis sponsored a tournament between seven French and seven English knights at Montendre on the march of Gascony. The English were said to have fought 'for the love of their ladies' but the French 'to prove the true and reasonable quarrel of their King against their ancient enemies'. In fact the occasion was neither chivalrous nor even courteous. Punctuated by mutual exchanges of insults, it ended with the death of one of the English knights and the injury of several others. The French champions, all of them Louis' friends and retainers, received a purse of a thousand gold francs each from him after the event. The chronicler of Saint-Denis, who disapproved of the Montendre tournament, struggled to understand the mentality of those who had taken part. But he understood very well that it was symptomatic of a mounting Anglophobia in court circles. French chivalry, he concluded, was 'filled with hatred for a nation which had murdered its King and insulted its Queen and yet was afraid to declare war, unwilling to be accused of violating the truce, and always looking for some other honourable way of avenging these outrages'.[43]

On 18 April 1402, while the Duke of Burgundy was at Arras celebrating the marriage of his daughter, the royal council met in Paris in the King's presence and agreed to appoint the Duke of Orléans as the President of the Conseil-Général des Aides. This position gave him a general power of direction over the tax revenues of the Crown in Languedoil. According to the official chronicler it was just part of a more general delegation of the King's powers to his brother 'in all matters great and small, in peace and war, within the realm and elsewhere'. Shortly after this Louis

pushed a new *taille* through the council. The first to be imposed in France for five years, it was reputed to be worth between 1,200,000 and 1,300,000 francs, representing an increase of about 60 per cent in the overall burden of royal taxation. Apart from a perfunctory reference to the cost of healing the papal schism and defending eastern Christendom from the Turks the sole justification given for the tax was that the money was wanted to fight 'Henry Duke of Lancaster who calls himself King'. An English army was said to have landed recently in Gascony to attack the French towns and castles of the march. This was a reference to the retinue of the Earl of Rutland, who had arrived there as Henry's lieutenant the previous autumn. But Louis does not seem to have had in mind a confrontation on the march of Gascony. He was thinking in terms of an invasion of England. It was 'widely reported', the ordinance declared, that Richard II was still alive in Scotland and likely to call for military support against his enemies. In Scotland Albany and Douglas had resolved upon an invasion of the north of England. The plan was to send a French army to Scotland in the summer to support them. The command was to be shared between Pierre des Essarts, the leader of the last French embassy to Scotland, and Jacques d'Heilly, a famous knight from Picardy, one of the heroes of the Nicopolis crusade, who by Froissart's account had for years 'explored the world beyond the seas and wandered through distant lands in search of adventure'. A fleet of transports was fitted out at Brest to join the Earl of Crawford's ships and carry the army to Scotland. A date was agreed for the opening of the campaign.[44]

Louis, however, had over-reached himself. He had not secured the consent of the Duke of Burgundy, and Philip was still powerful enough to exert himself on a major issue like this one. He had not opposed the policy of supporting the pseudo-Richard and his Scottish patrons. He was probably party to the decision to furnish ships and men to the Earl of Crawford, which had been made before he left Paris. The Franco-Scottish fleet was allowed to land its prizes in Flemish ports under the noses of his officials. He must also have approved, at least tacitly, the despatch of the expeditionary army to Scotland, for its leaders included several prominent members of his household. Jacques d'Heilly was one of his retainers and Pierre des Essarts, the army's commander, was his chamberlain. What Philip objected to was not the proposed campaign but his nephew's assumption of control over the public finances and the fact that it had been done while his back was turned. The proclamation of the *taille* provoked a serious political crisis. The King suffered a relapse at about the time that the ordinance was issued and the Parlement refused to register it. After some delay it was finally proclaimed

from the steps of the Châtelet on the authority of the King's private secretary, together with a declaration that the Dukes of Berry and Burgundy had approved it. Both men indignantly denied this. Berry claimed that his name had been added to the ordinance without his authority. Philip of Burgundy abruptly abandoned a hunting party, returned to Arras for discussions with his advisers, and then headed for Paris. From Clermont-en-Beauvaisis he addressed a furious protest to the judges of the Parlement. The claim that he had approved the *taille* was *'pures bourdes et mensonges*', he said. He had in fact been offered 100,000 francs for his approval after the decision had been made, which he had refused, but otherwise he had had nothing to do with it. He declared himself opposed in principle to increasing the burden of taxation on a population already heavily taxed and much diminished by plague, especially as the proceeds were likely to be spent on feckless grants to those in favour in Paris. The judges were asked to ensure the widest publicity for the Duke's views. But when they received the manifesto on the morning of 20 May, they were afraid to act. The Chancellor and the First President were away. The other officers of the court feared that the letter would have an incendiary effect on public opinion, which was of course Philip's objective. So his messengers repaired to the Châtelet and had it read out there. Copies were despatched to all the major towns and cities of the realm.[45]

The Duke of Burgundy's letter made a great impression. The King's councillors left Paris in a body later that day to meet Philip at Senlis. Three days of crisis talks followed in the town's ancient royal palace. The Duke of Orléans stayed in Paris. He was initially defiant. He had another royal ordinance published, apparently dating from the previous month, in which Charles VI nominated him as 'Lieutenant and Governor of the Realm' with all the powers of the Crown for as long as he remained incapable of governing in person. But Louis had no desire to test his popularity against his uncle's new-found reputation as the taxpayer's champion. Early in June, when the King briefly recovered his senses, Louis got him to cancel the *taille* and then had the decision proclaimed in the streets of the capital as his own doing. Philip was not satisfied. The appointment of Louis as the King's Lieutenant threatened to make his rival all-powerful in the capital. He was determined to have it revoked. On 17 June he entered Paris and went straight to the Hôtel Saint-Pol where he was closeted with the King for the best part of two days. On the 20th uncle and nephew met in Charles's presence at Philip's suburban mansion at Conflans.[46]

On 1 July the King presided over a difficult meeting of his

council in the absence of both men. Charles charged the assembled councillors to tell him plainly how they thought that affairs of the state were to be conducted during the periods when he was too ill to make decisions for himself. According to the chronicler of Saint-Denis, who had a low opinion of the Duke of Orléans, they replied that Louis was charming and eloquent but too impulsive and headstrong to be left to conduct the business of government alone. It needed the gravity and experience of the Duke of Burgundy. The King professed to agree with these sentiments. But the decisions which emerged from the meeting suggest that opinions were more qualified and possibly more divided than the chronicler thought. With his elevated status as the King's brother and first councillor, his large body of supporters and his growing wealth and territorial power, Louis was not easily marginalised. So a compromise was proposed. During the King's 'absences' the Duke of Burgundy was to govern the finances of the kingdom and other 'great affairs of state' jointly with his nephew. Decisions would require the concurrence of both of them. The inevitable conflicts between them were to be resolved by the Queen, aided by such other royal princes and councillors as she might call upon. The practical consequence was that when shortly afterwards Charles VI was once more incapacitated neither rival was able to exercise decisive influence over the council. Both were eventually persuaded to stay away from its meetings until the King recovered his wits.[47]

At about the end of July 1402 Louis of Orléans left Paris and made for his castle at Coucy. There on 7 August he addressed a remarkable letter to Henry IV challenging him to a duel. It was to be fought on foot in closed lists on a site somewhere between Bordeaux and Angoulême with lance, axe, sword and dagger. Louis addressed Henry for the first time as King of England. But he cannot possibly have imagined that a King would disparage himself by fighting a Duke on equal terms. The letter was a calculated insult, a personal gesture of frustration and defiance. The heralds who were charged to deliver it in England were kept waiting for a long time and then received in a surly audience and sent away without either an answer or the traditional gifts. Henry did eventually reply in December. His reply was a grandiloquent put-down which was designed to embarrass Louis in the eyes of his supporters and allies in France. He pointed out that in 1396 Louis had sworn personally to uphold the truce between France and England. He reminded him of the alliance that the two of them had made while he was in exile in Paris in 1399, plotting the coup which would eventually make him King. He attached a copy of their agreement and made sure that both letter and the agreement received wide publicity in

France. As for Louis' challenge, Henry rejected it with disdain. 'What a King does, he does for the honour of God and the common good of his realm and of all Christendom,' he said, 'not for mere bombast and greed.'[48]

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Henry IV had more pressing concerns than the taunts of a cadet of France. With the spring thaw Owen Glendower had resumed his strategy of rapid, needling attacks at unexpected points on England's over-extended forces in Wales. In April 1402 the Welsh leader had ambushed his arch-enemy Reginald Grey of Ruthin, one of the leading English lords of the northern march. Grey was captured and carried off to 'wild and rocky places'. He was only released against a ransom of 10,000 marks, a prodigious sum by the standards of the time which gave Glendower the means to prosecute his wars for years to come. Two months after Grey's capture the Welsh leader appeared in the hills of Radnorshire and advanced to within thirty miles of Leominster. On 22 June 1402 at the hill of Bryn Glas he inflicted a bloody defeat on a substantial English force sent out from Ludlow to meet him. Much of the English army was killed and their bodies mutilated by angry local Welsh. Among the many prisoners was their leader, the Earl of March's uncle, Edmund Mortimer. On both occasions an English captain had been betrayed to the enemy by Welsh soldiers in his own army, a symptom of the incipient disintegration of English authority in the region. Mortimer himself, who controlled his nephew's vast Welsh lordships, was suspected of having been taken prisoner by his own design. It may well have been true, for he shortly threw in his lot with Glendower and married one of his daughters. These events marked a high point of the Welsh rebellion. Twelve years later, when Glendower was a hunted fugitive, the Welshman Adam of Usk recorded that the battles of 1402 were 'still sung about at feasts'. Henry IV was at Berkhamsted castle in Hertfordshire when the news of Bryn Glas was brought to him. He declared his intention of marching against the Welsh in person. Troops were summoned from the whole of the Midlands and south of England to meet him at Lichfield on 7 July.[49]

Within days Henry was forced to cancel these plans by the deteriorating situation on the Scottish march. The English garrisons there had been on a war footing since the beginning of May 1402. Forced to fight on two fronts, the English government had been nervously switching their forces between the Scottish and Welsh marches as each new development was reported.[50] Then on top of their other concerns Henry's ministers had to face the threat of a rising in England in support of the Scottish-backed pretender

William Ward. Rumours of the pseudo-Richard's plans began to spread rapidly through the English counties in the spring. Constant repetition lent them a plausibility which became dangerous. Richard was said to have raised his standard in Scotland. He was supposed to have established contact with Owen Glendower and to have arranged for a simultaneous invasion of England from the west and north. He was expected to appear in the south by midsummer 'if not earlier'. Many people believed this. When midsummer came 500 men were reported to have gathered in arms in the meadows outside Oxford to meet him. Another 4,000 spread across the Midlands and southern counties were reported to be waiting for the signal to march. The government, which was well aware of the rumours, took the threat seriously. Successive proclamations denounced those thought to be responsible for spreading them. The friars, who had a strong hold on popular sentiment, caused particular concern. A number of Franciscans were prosecuted for treason and some were executed. There was clearly widespread sympathy for them. It proved hard to find jurors willing to try them even in London, and those who were chosen convicted the accused with obvious reluctance.[51]

At some stage the council learned about the French expeditionary force which was assembling in Brittany under Pierre des Essarts. It is not clear how much was known about the scale of these preparations or the destination of Pierre des Essarts' army. But a fleet of oared barges of the Cinque Ports filled with armed men was stationed in the Channel under the command of the Admiral of the North to intercept the French force. A large number of merchant ships were requisitioned and built up with timber castles fore and aft to join them. At the end of June 1402, shortly before Pierre des Essarts was due to embark, the English fleet managed to penetrate through the rocky channel between Finistère and the Ushant rocks and fell upon the French transports as they waited empty in the roads at Brest. Ten of them were captured and the rest blockaded in the harbour. This attack effectively put an end to French plans to mount a joint invasion of England with the Scots. A few French ships did later succeed in running the blockade and eventually reached Scotland. But they brought only thirty French knights including Pierre des Essarts himself. The whole force with their squires and attendants must have numbered less than a hundred.[52]

The crisis came between June and September with simultaneous offensives on both the Welsh and Scottish fronts. A horde of Scots entered Cumberland and penetrated south as far as Carlisle before they were dispersed by local levies raised by Hotspur. Another Scottish force, smaller but better armed and led, made for the east

march. On 22 June 1402 the day of the English disaster at Bryn Glas, they were confronted at Nisbet Moor in Berwickshire by an English force under the Scottish renegade George Dunbar. His men were drawn mainly from the garrison of Berwick and the Yorkshire retainers of the Earl of Northumberland. They were very nearly overwhelmed. Only the commitment of the reserve at the last moment saved the day. About a fortnight later, in early July, Owen Glendower invaded south Wales. The Welsh population rose in support. Cardiff, Newport, Abergavenny and other garrisoned castles of the English were attacked and their boroughs burned. The newly gathered harvest was carried off into the mountains. Henry IV was obliged to strip the northern counties of troops in order to face the new threat. But they proved useless against the guerilla tactics of the Welsh. When at the end of August three English armies entered Wales from Chester, Shrewsbury and Hereford, Glendower and his followers vanished into the hills and forests as they had so often done before. The English trudged after them in torrential rain and hail. Henry was still with the army in mid-Wales, mired in mud, when the Scots crossed the Tweed again in the second week of September and invaded Northumberland.[53]

At an estimated strength of 10,000 men it was one of the largest organised Scottish armies to enter England since the 1340s. Led by the Earl of Douglas, it included most of the higher nobility of Scotland with their companies and almost all the border lords as well as the small contingent of heavily armed French knights. Like most Scottish campaigns in England it had no very clear strategic objective beyond destruction, plunder and spectacle, and possibly revenge for the loss of Douglas's friends and followers at Nisbet Moor. Douglas knew that the English King was in Wales with most of his available troops. He expected no organised opposition. His army advanced to Newcastle burning and looting as it went and then turned for home. The defence was the responsibility of the Earl of Northumberland. He was accompanied by his son Hotspur and by George Dunbar. Their strength is a matter of conjecture but it was probably less than the 1,500 men-at-arms and 3,000 archers with which contemporaries credited them. They were certainly fewer than the Scots. They followed the same strategy which Hotspur had employed in the Otterburn campaign of 1388. They allowed the Scots to advance unhindered into England. Then, when they began to withdraw, they marched north through the night to cut off their retreat and force them to battle. The strategy had ended in disaster in 1388. But Otterburn was to be avenged in 1402.

On 14 September 1402 the Scots found their retreat barred by Northumberland's army at the village of Millfield about ten miles

south of the Tweed. Douglas dismounted his men and arrayed them across the northern slope of Humbleton Hill, an outlying hill of the Cheviots near the small town of Wooler. They were drawn up in the tightly packed formations which had been traditional among the Scots for more than a century. The English advanced towards them, taking up their own positions on low-lying ground behind a small river known as the Glen. They were keen to come to grips with the Scots and Hotspur, according to the Scottish chronicler Walter Bower, would have given them their head. He was restrained by George Dunbar who urged him to send the archers forward first. At about midday the densely packed English archers advanced and began to let off their volleys into the Scottish lines. They inflicted carnage on dismounted lines of Scots. Sir John Swinton, an elderly Scottish knight who had fought in English armies in France in the 1370s, knighted his old enemy Adam Gordon on the field and the two of them led a desperate charge by a hundred men-at-arms against the English lines in an attempt to dislodge the archers. They were baulked by the hail of arrows. Every one of them was killed. The Scottish archers were unable to achieve the range of their English counterparts and made no impression on the enemy. It was all over in less than an hour. The Scots fell back in disorder and began to turn and flee. They headed for the Tweed. Many did not make it. Others did not know the fords and were drowned trying to wade across. Most of the Scottish knights remained on the field, prevented from fleeing by the weight of their armour. Seizing his lance the Earl of Douglas resolved upon a last, desperate attack. He charged down the hill on foot with all his retainers about him. Most of them were killed as Swinton's men had been. Douglas himself, although encased in magnificent steel armour, suffered five wounds including the loss of an eye before he was taken prisoner. It was one of the few battles of the Hundred Years War in which victory was won entirely by archery. The main bodies of troops on either side were never engaged. The English lost only five men. The hillside, strewn with dead and wounded Scots, furnished rich pickings of armour and prisoners.

The names of the casualties of Humbleton Hill read like a roll call of Scotland's great political and military families. Their disappearance left a vacuum at the heart of Scottish politics. The heads of several of the noble houses of the border lost their lives. Some eighty Scottish lords were captured. Apart from Douglas himself, the prisoners included Murdoch Stewart Master of Fife, the eldest son of the Duke of Albany; the Scottish King's son-in-law George Douglas Earl of Angus, head of the Red Douglases; George Dunbar's nephew the Earl of Moray; and four Scottish barons.

Several French men-at-arms were also captured including both Pierre des Essarts and Jacques d'Heilly. It was left to their companions who escaped to send a gloomy assessment of the campaign to Charles VI. The French had never really understood the strategic limitations of the Scottish invasions of the north. They had always hoped that the Scots would penetrate closer to the real centres of English royal power in the Midlands and south of England. This time they had tried. But they had been overconfident, they wrote, penetrating too far from the border before turning for home.[54]

Henry IV was determined to extract the maximum political advantage from the victory. A week after the battle he wrote to all the leading English captains on the march directing that no Scottish prisoner should be paroled or ransomed without his leave, a highly unpopular policy among the victorious captains, who must have expected to make large profits from their prisoners. The more prominent prisoners were taken to London where four Scots and three Frenchmen were paraded by their captors before Parliament at Westminster in October as the King publicly thanked God for delivering them into his hands. Sir Adam Forrester, a prominent Scottish administrator and diplomat then in his sixties, who had been captured in the battle with his son, acted as spokesman. He begged the King to treat them 'as is fitting for an act of war and of arms'. Henry did not like Forrester, who had had the better of him in the diplomatic encounters of the past two years. But he promised that Murdoch Stewart would be treated as a 'valiant knight taken in the field', and bid all the prisoners dine with him in the Painted Chamber.[55]

The release of the French prisoners was just a question of money. Pierre des Essarts was ransomed almost immediately with the aid of advances and grants from the French royal princes. Others took longer to find their ransoms. Jacques d'Heilly, who was eventually helped out by a very large grant from Charles VI, does not appear to have returned to France until 1405. The French, who had for years regarded the Douglases as their chief allies in Scotland, tried to raise funds for Earl Archibald's ransom. But the English King was determined to hold on to his Scottish prisoners and use them as political bargaining counters. Douglas was destined to remain a prisoner until he was paroled in 1407 and he was not finally released from his bond until 1413. For Douglas this was a disaster. Absence weakened his political authority in Scotland and enabled lesser rivals to supplant him in the counsels of the Scottish King. In the lowlands his formidable network of clients and followers began to break up. In the following year Henry IV asserted overlordship

over all the lands of the Douglas earldom and purported to divide them up between the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland. North of the border it was believed that Northumberland's son Hotspur was plotting with George Dunbar the conquest of the whole of lowland Scotland as far as the Firth of Forth. But if Douglas the Tyneman was the biggest casualty of Humbleton Hill, others also suffered long periods of captivity. In spite of Henry's chivalrous words in Parliament, Murdoch Stewart effectively served as a hostage for the good behaviour of his father's government in Scotland. He was not released until 1416. A number of other Scots died in captivity of plague or battle wounds. Most of the rest were released over the next three years.[56]

The battle of Humbleton Hill was the last great battle between the English and the Scots on British soil until Flodden in 1513. It brought an abrupt end to Scotland's new-found self-confidence and to the long period when its relations with England had been dominated by the Douglases and their allies on the border. For some years the Duke of Albany abandoned the fight, turning instead to the business of consolidating his family's power north of the Forth. In about March 1403 a brief truce was finally patched up between England and Scotland. It was formalised six months later at Haddenstank, one of those desolate hamlets by the Tweed where the representatives of the two British kingdoms could meet across the disputed frontier. The terms left something to be desired. A joint declaration of the two delegations would later observe that they 'semen obscure and derke to the understanding of sume men'. But for all that the truce held for the next two years.[57]

Notes

1
*Cartellieri (1910), 151 (Berry); Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 141–2; Froissart, *Chron.* (KL), xvi, 211–12 (refugees); *Chron. R. St-Denis*, ii, 716; Martinière (1913), 340 (Charles VI). Wider public: Froissart, *Chron.* (KL), xvi, 211–12; Creton, 'Metr. Hist.', 382, 410; Deschamps, *Oeuvres*, vi, 133–4, 184–5; Pisan, *Advision*, 112–13; Taylor (2004).

2
Fresnel mission: *Ord.*, viii, 356–7; *Foed.*, viii, 98; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, ii, 730–2; Le Bis, 'Dossier', nos 5–6. Garrisons, watch: BN Fr. 32510, fols 338–338vo, Fr. n.a. 20027/194, 216; *Ord.*, viii, 356–7; BN Coll. Doat 208, fols 118–118vo. Fleet: *Foed.*, viii, 123; PRO E403/564, mm. 9, 10. Scots: *Choix de pièces*, i, 188. Albret: *Martinière (1913), 339.

3
Select Cases, vii, 123–4; *Foed.*, viii, 255–6.

4
Foed., viii, 165–6, 168–70; *Select Cases*, vii, 111–14; *Black Book Winchester*, 6; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 284–96; *Great Chron. London*, 77–83; Usk, 88, 90–2;

Eulogium, iii, 385–7; *Chron. traïson et mor*t, 229–51; *Literae Cantuarienses*, ed. J. B. Sheppard (1887–9), iii, 73–5; *Anglo-Norman L.*, nos 64, 66; Copinger, 73–4.

5
St Albans Chron., ii, 298–300; Usk, *Chron.*, 88–90; *Hist. Vitae*, 160–1; *Eulogium*, iii, 387; *Great Chron. London*, 83; *Proc. PC*, i, 111–12. Frisby: *Eulogium*, 391–2.

6
Foed., viii, 108–9; Le Bis, 'Dossier', nos 6–7.

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Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 143; *Proc. PC*, i, 102–3. On Leulinghem: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, i, 343, ii, 74–6.

8
Montreuil, Ep. 194, *Opera*, i, 280–1. Title: *Choix de pièces*, i, 188; Le Bis, 'Dossier', nos 11 [7, 8], 16 [1].

9
Choix de pièces, i, 189.

10
Henry in Paris: Sumption, iii, 857; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 60. Representation: *Chron. traïson et mort*, 74 (the D. of Berry was also represented, but his representative had been in England for some time: ibid.; AN KK254, fol. 22vo). Contacts: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 60–1. Conference: *Eng. Med. Dipl. Practice*, no. 132; Le Bis, 'Dossier', nos 15, 17, 19 [4]; *Foed.*, viii, 132, 142, 144–5.

11
Le Bis, 'Dossier', nos 5–11, 18, 19 [3]; *Proc. PC*, i, 118, 134; Usk, *Chron.*, 102–4, 106–14; *Foed.*, viii, 108, 164; 'Relation', 174–5; *Choix de pièces*, i, 193–7. Appropriation of dowry: Steel, 145.

12
Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 62; Wyntoun, *Orig. Chron.*, vi, 379; *Acts Parl. Scot.*, i, 572. On Albany: M. Brown (1998), 76–92.

13
Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 30–2; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 23–5; *Foed.*, viii, 153–4; M. Brown (1998), 101–2, 104–5. Edinburgh castle: *Exch. R. Scot.*, iii, 515. On Douglas: Boardman (1996), 223–6.

14
Leulinghem: Sumption, iii, 676–7. Treaty of Paris: Chaplais, *Eng. Med. Dipl. Practice*, no. 58 (p. 85); *Foed.*, vii, 850, viii, 17–18, 35–6, 50–1, 54–7, 65–6, 69–70, 72; *Cal. Doc. Scot.*, iv, no. 520. March days: *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 132–3, 149–50; *Foed.*, viii, 17, 69–70, 72–4; PRO E364/31, m. 1d (Elmham), E101/320/19; *Cal. Doc. Scot.*, iv, nos 491–3; Chaplais, *Eng. Med. Dipl. Prac.*, no. 707–8; Neville (1998), 79–83; Major, *Greater Britain*, 47.

15
Truce: *Cal. Doc. Scot.*, iv, no. 520; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 5–6. Raids: *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 278–80; *Cal. Doc. Scot.*, iii, no. 542; *Foed.*, viii, 107–8; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 13. Negotiations: *Roy. Lett.*, i, 8–15; *Foed.*, viii, 113; *Proc. PC*, i, 123, ii, 41. Planned campaign: *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 36–7 [80].

16
Foed., viii, 155–7; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 34; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 302; Usk, *Chron.*, 98–100; *Eulogium*, iii, 387; *Lib. Pluscard.*, i, 340–1. Supplies: *CCR 1399–1402,* 168–9; A. L. Brown (1974), 49–52. Meeting: *Proc. PC*, i, 169; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 163 [16]. Numbers: PRO E364/34, m. 4d. March days: Neville (1998), 97–8, 101–2. Raids: Usk, *Chron.*, 100; Hardyng,

Chron., 357; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 63–4.

17

Choix de pièces, i, 188–97; BN PO 1072/Essarts/50, 57, 58. On John Forrester (the master), D. Watt, 194–7.

18

Select Cases, vii, 114–15; *Foed.*, viii, 159–60; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 104–5, 136–7, 145–6 [15–16, 77, 105, 107], 161 [12]; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 304; *Eulogium*, iii, 388–9; *CPR 1399–1401*, 359, 370, 386, 418, 435, 555; *Foed.*, viii, 159–69, 181–2.

19

J. E. Lloyd, 8–17, 24–5; Davies, 145–9; *Controversy between Sir Richard Scrope and Sir Robert Grosvenor in the Court of Chivalry*, ed. N. H. Nicolas (1832), i, 254; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 304.

20

St Albans Chron., ii, 304; *Hist. Vitae*, 168.

21

Parl. Rolls, viii, 136–7, 144–6 [77, 101–7]; *Statutes*, ii, 124–5, 129; *Foed.*, viii, 184–5.

22

'Relation', 170–5, 176–81; *Anglo-Norman L.*, no. 410; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, ii, 752.

23

Roy. Lett., i, 52–3; *Foed.*, viii, 166, 167–8, 185–6; *Proc. PC*, i, 172, ii, 52–4, 127; *Cal. Signet L.*, nos 30–1; PRO E404/16/708. The French were in Scotland by May: *Exch. R. Scot.*, iii, 516. Death of Douglas: Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 34.

24

CPR 1399–1401, 37, 155, 158; *Foed.*, viii, 181–2; *Anglo-Norman L.*, no. 244; *Proc. PC*, i, 148–9, ii, 59–60.

25

Usk, *Chron.*, 128; 'Ann. O. Glyn Dŵr', 150–1; 'MS Harleian 1989', 284; *Anglo-Norman L.*, nos 247; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 69–72; *Issues Exch.*, 283; *Proc. PC*, i, 145–8; *Foed.*, viii, 209.

26

Proc. PC, i, 151–3, ii, 54–6, 134; *Anglo-Norman L.*, nos 226–8, 235–6, 238, 244; *H. Owen and J. B. Blakeway, *History of Shrewsbury* (1825), i, 181–2; 'Ann. O. Glyn Dŵr', 151; Usk, *Chron.*, 144–6, 149–53; *Foed.*, viii, 225–6; *Proc. PC*, ii, 59–60.

27

Given-Wilson (1986), 94; T. E. F. Wright, 67; *Proc. PC*, i, 154, ii, 57.

28

Welsh war damage: Davies, 215–16, 258–9; Rees, 273–80; H. Watt, 53–81. Domain: *Proc. PC*, ii, 10; Somerville, i, 161–5; Castor, 28–30. Customs: Ormrod (1999 [1]), 159–62, figs. 8.1, 8.3.

29

Rec. Convoc., iv, 194; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 30 [65], 101 [9], 175–6 [28], 197 [65], 330 [15], 423 [17]. Land tax: Sel. Docs. *English Const. Hist.*, 213–14; *CFR 1399–1405,* 251–64.

30

Proc. PC, i, 154, ii, 57, 58, 64–5; Ormrod (1995), 147, fig. 23. For total household expenditure, Given-Wilson (1986), 94.

31

Parl. Rolls, viii, 255 [49] (quotation). Finance: PRO E364/37, m. 6 (Usk);

Parl. Rolls, viii, 254–6 [49]; Grummitt, 278–80, 283–5. Accumulated debts include dishonoured tallies.

32

Dowry: Steel, 81–2, 145. Forfeitures: *Proc. PC*, i, 108, 112. Army of 1400: A. L. Brown (1974), 48–9, 53; Steel, 83–4. Borrowing: *Foed.*, viii, 245; *Proc. PC*, ii, 72–6; Steel, 86–7, 132–48. Bad debts: *Proc. PC*, i, 151–2, ii, 57–9; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 73–6; Steel, 106–7.

33

Gower, *Works*, iii, 480–92. Cf. Sumption, iii, 775–7.

34

Bell et al., 65, 73, 75–7, 95–6; Copinger, 74, 75.

35

Keen (1991), 129–35; Gower, *Works*, iii, 484 (ll. 99–101); Hoccleve, *Regement*, 32 (ll. 869–75).

36

Ord., viii, 418–20; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 98; *Foed.*, viii, 186–7; PRO E364/34, m. 3.

37

Isabelle: 'Relation', 180; *Foed.*, viii, 152–3 (under wrong year, see *Cal. Signet L.*, no. 42), 194–5. Finance: *Proc. PC*, i, 143–5, 155, 159–64; *Anglo-Norman L.*, no. 331; Usk, *Chron.*, 144.

38

Foed., viii, 194–6, 217–19; *Itin. Ph. le Hardi*, 315; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 33–4; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 4–6; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 145–6. Cost: *Proc. PC*, i, 136–42, 154. Truce: *Foed.*, viii, 219–20; Chaplais, *Eng. Med. Dipl. Prac.*, no. 281 (a); PRO C61/108, m. 16; C76/86, m. 12; *Choix de pièces*, i, 215–20; Le Bis, 'Dossier', no. 28 [4].

39

Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 38–40; *Acts Parl. Scot.*, i, 221–2. Political background: Boardman (1996), 232–43; M. Brown (1998), 103.

40

Proc. PC, i, 168–73; *Anglo-Scottish Relations, 1174–1328*, ed. E. L. G. Stones (1965), 173–82; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 58–65.

41

CCR 1399–1402, 450; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 277–8 [84]; *Select Cases*, vii, 212–13; **Chron. traïson et mort*, 270–1; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 28; Wyntoun, *Orig. Chron.*, vi, 390–1. Crawford embassy: AN K57/912; BN Fr. 14371, fol. 147–147vo (cf. *Eulogium*, iii, 394). Creton: *Dillon, 79–82, 94. Serle: Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii, 264. Response in England: *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 316–18, 414; *Foed.*, viii, 255–7, 261, 262–3, 268–9; *Issues Exch.*, 286; **Chron. traïson et mort*, 267–77; *Select Cases*, vii, 151–5, 212; *Storey (1978), 359.

42

Crawford's operations: *Inv. doc. Ecosse*, 34; AN K57/912; KK267, fol. 73vo; PRO E28/26 (22 Mar. 1402); AN J645/36, 48 (rolls of English claims); Le Bis, 'Dossier', no. 28 [9], 32; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 218–19; *Handelingen (1384–1405)*, nos 559, 561, 572, 582, 583; *Le Canarien*, ed. E. Aznar et al. (2008), 76–9. English retaliation: PRO E403/571, m. 27 and see the rolls of claims, AN J645/35 (French), PRO C47/32/24 (Castilian, Flemish), PRO E30/1280, 1281, 1628 (Flemish), AD Nord, B546/1509392 (Flemish). For Hanse losses: *CPR 1401–5,* 133; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 162–3, 208–9. 238–42. Ford, 72–4 (an important study) analyses these documents.

43

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 30–4; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 148–50. Generally on challenges: Given-Wilson (2008), 31, 34–5, 38–42; Jarry, 284–5.

44

Ord., viii, 494–6; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 33, ii, 285; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 24–6, 28, 36; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 147. *Taille*: BN Fr. 14371, fols 146vo–148vo; *Chronographia*, iii, 198–9. Franco-Scottish invasion: *Foed.*, viii, 257; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 104 (under wrong year). Heilly: Froissart, *Chron.* (KL), xv, 333.

45

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 26–8, ii, 285; Baye, *Journ.*, 34–6; *Itin. Ph. le Hardi,* 324–5. Prizes: Le Bis, 'Dossier', no. 28 [9]. Heilly: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 119. Essarts: BN Fr. 31920, fol. 104.

46

Itin. Ph. le Hardi, 325–6; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 147; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 28, 34.

47

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 6; *Ord.*, viii, 518–19 (proclaimed, 3 July); Baye, *Journ.*, i, 37, ii, 285; *Choix de pièces*, i, 240–3.

48

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 43–9; *Chron. R. St-Denis.*, iii, 56–8.

49

St Albans Chron., ii, 316, 320–2, 338; Usk, *Chron.*, 158–60; 'Ann. O. Glyn Dŵr', 151 (under wrong year); *Hist. Vitae*, 172; *Foed.*, viii, 279; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 162 [13]. Mortimer's turn: *Eulogium*, iii, 398; *Orig. Letters*, Ser. II, i, 24–6. Lichfield muster: *Proc. PC*, i, 185–6; *Foed.*, viii, 264–5.

50

PRO E364/42, m. 4 (Scrope) (garrisons); *Foed.*, viii, 271–3.

51

Eulogium, iii, 389–94; *Select Cases*, vii, 126–8; *Storey (1978), 353–71; *Foed.*, viii, 255–7, 261, 262–3, 268–9; **Chron. traïson et mort, 267–77*.

52

PRO E403/573, mm. 1, 11, 24 (8 Apr., 11 May, 21 July); *CPR 1401–5*, 124; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 104–6. French numbers: *Hist. Vitae*, 174.

53

Scots: *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 322–6; *Proc. PC*, i, 187–8; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 42–4. Welsh: 'Ann. O. Glyn Dŵr', 151–2; Usk, *Chron.*, 160–2; *Hist. Vitae*, 173–4; *Proc. PC*, ii, 70–1.

54

Cal. Doc. Scot., iv, 402–3; *Foed.*, ix, 25–6; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 162 [14]; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 328–34; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 44–8. French accounts (based on the survivors): *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 44–6; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 148; *Chronographia*, iii, 203. On Swinton: *ODNB*, liii, 514–15.

55

Cal. Doc. Scot., iv, 402–3; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 163 [14–16].

56

Essarts: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 44; BN Fr. 31920, fol. 104. Heilly: *Foed.*, viii, 393; BN PO 1502/Heilly/6. Douglas: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 44–6; *Cal. Doc Scot.*, iv, nos 737, 762; *Foed.*, viii, 519, 520, ix, 8; M. Brown (1998), 106–7. Projects in lowlands: *Foed.*, viii, 289–90; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 48–50. Murdoch of Fife: Balfour-Melville (1936), 65–6.

57

PRO 364/42, m. 4 (Scrope) (truce); *Foed.*, viii, 321–2, 332, 345, 363–4, 368–72, 384–6; *Ant. Kal.*, ii, 271; *Roy. Lett.*, ii, 37–40.

CHAPTER III

The Pirate War, 1402–1404

Piracy had been endemic in the Channel and the Bay of Biscay for centuries, but the Earl of Crawford's destructive cruise of 1402 was different. It was more organised, larger in scale and plainly enjoyed the support of influential men in the French government if not of the King's council itself. The raids left a trail of unsatisfied claims by merchants and shipowners who had lost their property and a legacy of ill-feeling between the two governments. Each responded in the time-honoured fashion by authorising reprisals against the property of the other in an escalating cycle of violence. These operations were mainly the work of English, French and Flemish privateers. They inaugurated the first great age of Atlantic privateering, and the birth of a tradition that would continue until the eighteenth century. In a later age the Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius would classify such operations as legitimate private war, but some of those involved could fairly be called pirates. The boundary between war and crime, between public and private violence, was as uncertain and permeable at sea as it was on land.

Privateering, a practice which was sanctioned by international law until the middle of the nineteenth century, was a method of making war which had been developed largely by the English since the thirteenth century and had already achieved a high degree of organisation. Governments issued letters of marque to merchants claiming to have suffered losses at the hands of nationals of a foreign prince, which authorised them to recoup their losses by 'reprisal', in other words by seizing ships and cargoes of the foreign prince's subjects at sea. In time of war, letters of marque were commonly issued in more general terms, which were not limited to seizures by way of reprisal. They authorised the persons named to capture the merchant ships and cargoes of declared enemies for their own profit provided that they left neutral property alone. The Anglo-French treaty of 1396 had banned the issue of letters of marque and with a few exceptions the ban had been observed. But from 1402 onward they began to be issued again, and most privateers had at least the tacit authority of their sovereigns even if they did not have formal commissions. 'Know ye,' declared a typical English document,

that we have given leave to our well-beloved Henry Pay to sail and pass across the seas with as many ships, barges and balingers of war, men-at-arms and bowmen, all fully equipped, as he may be able to recruit in order to do all the damage he can to our declared enemies as well as for their destruction and for the safeguarding and defence of our faithful lieges.

The King directed his admirals and all his officers in coastal areas to give whatever advice or assistance Pay might require. This was manifestly an officially sanctioned venture.

By the beginning of the fifteenth century the English had begun to enlarge the scope of their privateering operations by targeting not just enemy ships but neutral ships carrying enemy cargoes. The rewards were high and the privateers no doubt needed little encouragement. But it seems clear that the initiative came from the government. Blockading an enemy's seaborne trade was a highly effective weapon of war. But it was also extremely abrasive and provoked bitter complaints in the fifteenth century, just as it would in the time of Blake or Nelson, for it required neutral ships to submit to being stopped and searched at sea and taken into English ports if they were found to be carrying suspicious goods. This could be a terrifying experience. Early in 1403 the *Christopher* from the Hanse port of Danzig was captured in the Channel by four ships of London and Dartmouth operating from Calais. Henry IV personally interviewed their masters to discover the facts before defending his subjects in a letter to the Grand Master of the Teutonic Order. This reveals very clearly what the King expected of privateers holding his commission. The German ship, he said, had been sailing without national markings. When the English challenged the crew to state their nationality they gave no answer, filled the top-castles with armed men, let out all their sail and tried to make off. The English opened fire with bombards mounted on their forecastles. They caught up with the fleeing ship and boarded her, overcoming and capturing the crew after a long and bloody hand-to-hand fight. She was found to be carrying wine from La Rochelle and was taken into Southampton where she was eventually forfeited to her captors. The Hanseatic towns had lost eight ships in this way during 1402 in addition to another four which were plundered and then allowed to go. Castile, another important neutral, lost seventeen.

The distinction between enemy and neutral property was not always easy to apply. Ownership was often uncertain. Enemy ships could sail under neutral colours. Enemy cargoes could be carried in neutral hulls and vice versa. Ships' manifests were not always honest. It was not always clear whether a truce was in force at the time of the capture. Of course privateers were not particularly fastidious about the limits of their authority. But their trade was not

the free-for-all that it is sometimes assumed to have been. An elaborate body of practice and law had grown up for adjudicating on the right to prize, which was administered partly by the chancellor and the king's council, partly by the admirals and their local deputies, marshals, sergeants and clerks. Their work has generated a mass of documents in the remarkably full surviving records of the English government. They show that complaints of breaches of the truce, unauthorised acts of war or attacks on neutral property were taken seriously and routinely investigated. Privateers, however favoured, were liable to be summoned before the council or the admirals' officers to prove their right to prize 'as the law of the sea requires'. There was a regular flow of orders to restore neutral goods or hulls or to pay compensation to ruined German or Castilian shipowners and merchants. In one notable case a squadron of ships was specially fitted out by the Admiral of England to capture the notorious Rye pirate William Long, who was taken off his ship at sea and consigned to the Tower of London. If some men disobeyed the king and got away with it, that was to be expected of the uncertain processes and limited police powers of the medieval state. But there were others who paid for their transgressions with their property and a few with their liberty or their necks.[1]

The growth of officially sponsored privateering at the beginning of the fifteenth century reflected the progressive withdrawal of governments from the costly business of building and operating warships themselves. In France the great state arsenal at Rouen, which had turned out oared warships since the thirteenth century, had stopped building and refitting ships by the end of the 1380s and, apart from brief spurts of activity in 1405 and 1416, never restarted. In England the last of Edward III's great ships, the 300-ton carrack *Dieulagarde*, had been given away to a courtier in 1380. In the early years of his reign Henry IV owned just one sailing ship in addition to four barges which appear to have been used mainly to move the baggage of the royal household along the Thames. Requisitioning ships was not much less expensive than owning them, for hire had to be paid by the ton and crew's wages by the day. Chiefly for reasons of cost, the English government had since 1379 entrusted much of the routine work of keeping the sea to contract fleets raised by commercial syndicates in London and the West Country. Privateers and contract fleets had their limitations. They were undisciplined. They brought the King into collision with neutral countries. They had little interest in his larger strategic objectives. They were particularly bad at defensive work, such as convoy duty and patrolling the Channel against coastal raiders, which offered limited prospects of spoil. An ambitious attempt to

hand over the whole work of 'keeping the seas' to commercial operators in 1406 in return for the proceeds of the tunnage and poundage dues proved to be disastrous for all of these reasons, and the arrangements had to be terminated early. But for offensive operations against enemy commerce and coastal settlements, privateers largely displaced royal fleets throughout the reign of Henry IV. They operated at their own risk and expense and cost nothing in wages, hire or maintenance. They were therefore the natural resort of penurious governments.[2]

In the early fifteenth century there were active privateering syndicates in London, Hull, the Cinque Ports and Guernsey. But the West Country was already the major centre for this kind of buccaneering, as it would remain for centuries. Dartmouth, Plymouth and Fowey were important privateering bases. According to a charter of Richard II Dartmouth had 'above all places in the realm long been and still is strong in shipping and therewith has wrought great havoc on the King's enemies in time of war'. The most celebrated English privateers, the Hawley family of Dartmouth, father and son, were living testimony to the wealth that could be made from prizes. Hawley the elder may have been a pirate in French eyes and occasionally in English ones, but he was a man of some social standing at home, the owner of Hawley's Hall, the grandest house in Dartmouth, fourteen times mayor of the town and twice returned to Parliament. He founded St Saviour's Church in Dartmouth, where his grand memorial brass, showing an idealised knight in full armour, can still be seen. His son, who carried on the family business, acquired extensive estates in the West Country, married the daughter of a chief justice of King's Bench and sat twelve times in Parliament for Dartmouth. The Hawleys were close to the governments of Richard II and Henry IV and commonly acted under royal commissions.

More typical perhaps was the much rougher Harry Pay, the recipient of the commission quoted above. He was a professional pirate based at Poole in Dorset who had been attacking the ships and harbours of neutral Castile for years before he received a commission. His operations in the Channel against the French were to make him a popular hero in the first decade of the fifteenth century. Mark Mixtow of Fowey and the Spicer brothers of Plymouth and Portsmouth were men of the same stamp although on a lesser scale and for shorter periods. The Spicers had been actively engaged in piracy in the Atlantic for at least two years before the breach with France brought legitimacy to their operations and respectability to their lives. Richard Spicer represented Portsmouth in Parliament, served on commissions of array and ended up as a

Hampshire gentleman. The Channel pirates contributed a good deal to the economy of the depressed coastal towns of southern England and, as the careers of men like Hawley and Spicer show, they enjoyed strong popular support. When William Long was eventually released from the Tower the town of Hythe held a banquet in his honour and Rye elected him to Parliament.[3]

The French made use of very similar adventurers. The Bretons were regarded in England as 'the greatest rovers and the greatest thieves that have been in the sea many a year'. Saint-Malo, an enclave of French royal territory within the duchy of Brittany, was the major centre of piracy and privateering on the French Atlantic coast. Its seamen were responsible for a large number of the captures of 1402. Privateers operating from Harfleur, another important base, were said in March 1404 to have taken £100,000 worth of cargoes in addition to exacting exorbitant ransoms from their prisoners. A contemporary described the port as the capital of Atlantic piracy, rich in the spoil of English shipping. Gravelines, although technically part of Flanders, was in fact under the control of the French captains-general commanding on the march of Calais, who built it up as another major privateering centre.

In France as in England most privateering ventures were commercial enterprises, financed by shrewd businessmen for profit. Guillebert de Fretin, a native of the Calais pale who had fled after refusing to swear allegiance to the English King, made his base at Le Crotoy in Ponthieu and achieved a short-lived fame as the leading French corsair of his time. His career of destruction would culminate in the sack of Alderney in June 1403 in which a large number of the inhabitants lost their lives. Guillebert's cruises were funded by a syndicate of merchants of Abbeville and almost certainly authorised by French officials. When the French temporarily withdrew their support from French privateers and banished him, he and one of his lieutenants continued their depredations under the flag of Scotland. Equally commercial in their inspiration were the campaigns of Wouter Jansz, probably the most successful Flemish privateer of the time, who operated several ships out of Bervliet and Sluys in north-west Flanders. His most famous exploit was to sail up the Thames and capture an English freighter filled with the booty of a recent raid on the coast of Flanders, including the painted altar-piece of Sint Anna ter Muiden. Jansz appears to have been financed at least in part by an Italian corsair called Giovanni Portofino who had terrorised the western Mediterranean during the 1390s before moving his operations to northern Europe. The English regarded Jansz as a 'notorious pirate' and he is unlikely to have held any formal commission. But he made

himself useful to the towns of the Zwin estuary by guarding the entrances against enemy incursions and he certainly had well-placed protectors.[4]

In July and August 1402 the English and French ambassadors met at Leulinghem to deal with the escalating violence at sea. Faithful to the increasingly hollow pretence that the truce of 1396 remained in force, they reached agreement on 14 August on a procedure for verifying and meeting claims and on measures to prevent a recurrence. The seamen involved on both sides were formally disowned and declared to be criminals actuated entirely by malice and greed. All prisoners and cargoes in their hands were ordered to be released without payment and outstanding letters of marque and reprisal were cancelled. Pirates who persisted in attacking merchant ships were not to be received in either country.[5]

These arrangements were a dead letter from the start. In the last quarter of 1402 another twenty English merchantmen were captured. Crawford had by now returned to Scotland with the rump of the French expeditionary force. But many of the ships and crews responsible for the new seizures had previously served under him. In the following January twelve English vessels were captured in a single incident and taken into Harfleur where their cargoes and crews were taken off under the noses of royal officials and their hulls set on fire. Another twenty or thirty English merchantmen were reported to be held in Norman ports. The English retaliated with vigour. They seized French and Flemish property in English ports. They commissioned new privateering fleets of their own. Over the winter of 1402–3 most of the more notorious English privateers were once more at sea with the King's commissions. There are no reliable figures for French losses in these months, but they were almost certainly higher than English ones. With a much larger seafaring community and many more ships, the English were always likely to have the better of these exchanges. During the following months English privateers sacked the Île de Ré off the coast of Poitou, burning down its famous abbey. They seized French fishing boats in the Channel, carrying off large numbers of fishermen for ransom. They landed at several points along the French coast to seize booty and prisoners. According to French estimates some 3,000 English and Gascon seamen were engaged in these operations, which continued until the following summer.[6]

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The sudden upsurge of fighting at sea awakened ancient ghosts in Flanders. Flanders was a province of France, but as one of the principal trading and shipowning regions of Europe it had enjoyed

close commercial and political relations with England for centuries. Flanders needed English wool, the indispensable raw material for the great cloth industries on which much of its population depended. England was also a significant market for the finished product. There was a large Flemish community in England, based mainly in London, and an even larger English mercantile community in Bruges and in the Dutch port of Middelburg on the other side of the estuary of the Scheldt. England and Flanders had a common interest in the security of the trade routes of the North Sea. It was not simply a question of preserving trade between them. As the Flemings had learned to their cost in the 1380s, the maintenance of peace across the North Sea was the key to the international banking and entrepôt business of Bruges and the county's trade with the Italian maritime cities of Venice and Genoa and the Baltic towns of the Hanseatic League.[7] There was an important political dimension to Flanders's links with England. The English kings had always had allies in the towns of Flanders and unparalleled opportunities to make trouble there. They had been the patrons of all the great urban revolutions which had divided the Flemings and undermined the power of their counts since the end of the thirteenth century. Jacob van Artevelde, the leader of the Flemish revolution of 1339, had been a client of England and his son Philip, who had led the revolution of Ghent during the civil wars of the 1380s, was a pensioner of Richard II. English fleets and armies fought in Flanders in support of their cause. An English garrison had been stationed in Ghent as recently as 1385.

The informal alliance between England and Flanders was a perennial problem for the counts. They were under constant pressure from their subjects to avoid war with England or, if it could not be avoided, then at least to remove Flanders from the front line. Philip of Burgundy had inherited these problems with the territory. The Four Members of Flanders, a sort of grand committee representing the interests of Bruges and its district and the industrial towns of Ghent and Ypres, wielded considerable political influence. They openly pressed for a commercial treaty which would allow Flanders to remain neutral even at times when England and France were at war. Their demands posed an awkward dilemma for the Duke of Burgundy. As the King's uncle and a considerable figure on his council, Philip could not easily remove a French principality from the international orbit of France. But neither could he ignore the interest of the powerful commercial and industrial oligarchies of Flanders on whom he depended for his political authority and a growing proportion of his revenues.[8]

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, as France moved closer

to war with England and the war at sea acquired a momentum of its own, these ancient dilemmas re-emerged. The English government had generally treated Flanders as an autonomous state and a neutral, in spite of its legal status as part of the French kingdom. But the expansion of English privateering to target French cargoes carried in neutral bottoms spelled disaster for the important Flemish carrying trade. In the course of 1402 no fewer than twenty-seven Flemish ships had been captured at sea on account of England's quarrel with France. When the winter gales subsided in March 1403 and the English privateers resumed their cruises they took another twenty-six Flemish ships in the space of two months. The Duke of Burgundy's first instinct had been to take reprisals against English merchants and goods in Flanders. But his subjects, terrified of falling out with their main trading partner, refused to cooperate. Meeting at Ypres in July 1402 the Four Members resolved to look for an accommodation with England instead. As one of its representatives told the English agents in Calais, whatever the Duke might say 'the land of Flanders is no enemy of the King of England'.

That autumn they sent ambassadors to England and Scotland to open negotiations for what amounted to a treaty of neutrality. These initiatives culminated in an agreement with Henry IV's council at Westminster on 7 March 1403. The terms provided for a temporary truce pending a conference at Calais in July, when it was hoped to make a more permanent arrangement. Meanwhile Flemish goods were to be immune from seizure in England or at sea, on the Flemings' undertaking that they would not pass French goods off as their own. A corresponding immunity was conferred on English cargoes in Flanders. The practical effect was to allow Flemish traders to exclude French goods from the Flemish carrying trade as if France was a foreign country. The Flemish emissaries understood this perfectly. When Philip received them in Paris after their return they pressed him to allow Flanders to 'remain neutral in the war of the two realms'. They were followed a few days later by a delegation of the Four Members. There were 'rumours and fears throughout Flanders', they said, that war would shortly break out with England. The life of the territory depended on the trade in cloth and wool. They would all be ruined if the war was allowed to interrupt it.[9]

Since one of the Flemish negotiators at Westminster was his councillor and the other a canon of St Donatien in Bruges, the Duke of Burgundy must have given at least his tacit assent to their dealings with the English. But he regarded them as a disagreeable necessity. As the date fixed for the Anglo-Flemish conference at Calais approached, Philip reluctantly submitted to the Flemish

demands. At the beginning of May 1403, during an interval of lucidity, Charles VI was induced to let Philip negotiate a separate treaty with England in his capacity as Count of Flanders. The terms of his negotiating authority were hammered out between his officials and Charles's councillors in Paris in the course of June. It was a remarkable document, which envisaged an immunity not just for the Anglo-Flemish trade but for the county itself. The Duke was authorised to agree that if war broke out the Flemings would not be required to take up arms in the cause of France. French royal troops would not be allowed to operate from Flanders unless the English actually invaded it, and French ships of war would not be allowed to use Flemish ports except for short visits to take on water and victuals. It is obvious that some features of this arrangement were completely unacceptable to the French royal council and had been included simply to satisfy the Four Members. In a secret protocol drawn up shortly afterwards Philip promised the King that in spite of the breadth of the authority conferred on him he would agree nothing that might prevent a French army from launching an expedition to Scotland or an invasion of England from Flemish ports.[10]

For some years Flanders was destined to pursue two inconsistent policies towards England, the Duke's policy and that of the Four Members. The Four Members did their best to enforce the agreement that they had made with Henry IV. They sent their agents to every port of western Flanders from Sluys to Gravelines with orders to stop the fitting out of ships of war against England. At least one corsair who defied their wishes was imprisoned. Meanwhile Philip of Burgundy declined to be bound by the agreement and in April 1403 authorised the seizure of £10,000 worth of English merchandise by the water bailiff of Sluys in retaliation for the latest piratical raids in the North Sea. Philip nominated his own representatives to participate in the Anglo-Flemish conference at Calais alongside those of the Four Members, but they were consistently obstructive, raising one procedural objection after another. As a result the conference was repeatedly adjourned without a permanent agreement. Nevertheless the provisional arrangements agreed at Westminster were extended from session to session and progressively expanded as the English pressed their demands and the Flemings yielded. In August 1403 the Four Members agreed to formalise the prohibition on the carriage of French cargoes in Flemish ships and extended it to cover Scottish merchandise as well. They also promised to release English prisoners and cargoes seized by the Duke's officers. All of this was done on their own authority without any formal endorsement by

either the Duke of Burgundy or the King of France. The French royal council expressed the strongest misgivings about the whole business and in the event the August agreement was never ratified. But it was generally observed in practice and negotiations were never entirely broken off. The English government maintained what amounted to a permanent diplomatic mission in Calais charged with the conduct of relations with Flanders under the supervision of Henry IV's long-serving lieutenant-governor of the town, Richard Aston, and a meticulous Oxford lawyer called Nicholas Ryshton. It would take them four years of continuous and accident-prone negotiation before an Anglo-Flemish treaty was finally concluded in very different political conditions in 1407.[11]

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Brittany was not an economic or maritime power on a level with Flanders, but shipowning was just as important to its people. Much of the population of the duchy was concentrated in the innumerable small harbours of its coastal fringe and drew their subsistence from the sea. Breton ships were actively engaged in the entrepôt trades in grain, wine and salt, trades which were heavily dependent on the great producing areas of Poitou and Gascony and the markets of England and Flanders. The Bretons were therefore just as vulnerable as the Flemings to the disruption of the sea lanes of the Channel and the North Sea. The surviving customs records suggest that Brittany's trade with England fell by more than half during the maritime wars of 1402. No comparable assessment can be made of the impact on Brittany's trade with Flanders but it must have been considerable. Flanders, as the author of the *Libelle of Englyshe Polycye* observed in the 1430s, was 'the staple of their marchaundy, which marchaundy may not pass [that] way but by the coast of England'.[12]

The political situation in Brittany was at this stage extremely uncertain. The duchy had been ruled since the 1340s by the house of Montfort, a baronial family from the Île de France which had succeeded in establishing itself in power only after a succession of civil wars and with English military support. Their rivals the counts of Penthièvre, who had been backed by the French Crown, had been defeated in the field and finally submitted in the treaty of Guérande, which brought an end to a quarter of a century of civil war in 1365. The outcome had eventually been acknowledged by the French Crown in 1381, when John IV de Montfort had submitted to Charles VI and renounced his former English connections. But the treaty did not put an end to the divisions of Brittany, any more than John IV's submission put an end to the residual suspicion of his house among the politicians in Paris. The counts of Penthièvre, although they

paid lip-service to the treaties and did homage to the Montfort dukes, had never recognised defeat. In the 1380s and 1390s, they had maintained a sullen resistance, punctuated by occasional outbreaks of violence. They were supported by a network of clients and allies dominated by Olivier de Clisson, former Constable of France and the most powerful territorial magnate in Brittany. Clisson, whose daughter Marguerite had married the head of the house of Penthièvre, had for many years been the animating spirit behind their opposition to the reigning dynasty.

John IV had died at Nantes in November 1399, leaving a ten-year-old son to succeed him as John V. The government was exercised on the child's behalf by his mother Joan of Navarre, a beautiful and politically astute woman of thirty-one. In the short period of her rule Joan's main concern was to protect her son from the venomous legacy of Brittany's fourteenth-century civil wars. To this end she negotiated a historic reconciliation with Olivier de Clisson. He was now a venerable figure in his mid-sixties and age had dulled his former ambitions. On 23 March 1402 Joan had her son John, although still a minor, crowned as duke in Nantes cathedral, the first recorded occasion on which any duke of Brittany had received a formal coronation. Clisson himself appeared at the ceremony and marked the end of the ancient and destructive feud by knighting the young Duke in front of the high altar of the cathedral. According to a later, perhaps apocryphal story, his daughter had urged him to seize the chance to secure the duchy for her family. 'Cruel, perverse woman,' he is supposed to have replied, dismissing her from his presence with such fury that she broke her leg as she escaped down the stairs.[13]

The timing of John V's coronation had been carefully planned. As soon as the festivities were over Joan announced her intention of marrying Henry IV of England. After what must have been several months of secret negotiations she was married to him by proxy in a ceremony at the palace of Eltham on 3 April 1402. The couple were not complete strangers. They had met at least once in 1398, when she had accompanied her first husband on a brief visit to England. Joan probably married Henry for status and it may be for companionship. He was thirty-four years old, a widower for the past decade, a famous figure in the world of European chivalry and a king. Henry's own motives are more difficult to divine. Brittany was important to England. It had long-standing commercial relations with the country. It also stood across the main sea and land routes to Gascony. It is natural to suppose that Henry IV hoped to renew England's old alliance with the Breton duchy and perhaps even take control of the regency. But in the conditions of 1402 these ideas

were hardly realistic. Joan's declared intention was to resign the regency and join her new husband in England. The great ceremonies at Nantes suggest that the plan was to leave John V in Brittany as the nominal head of his government with Olivier de Clisson as regent for the brief period of eighteen months before he reached his majority. Clisson had already been put in possession of the newly enlarged and refortified citadel at Nantes which served as the centre of the ducal administration.[14]

To the Duke of Burgundy, however, a Clisson regency in Brittany was hardly more welcome than an English one. Olivier de Clisson was a declared ally of Louis of Orléans. Indeed all the circumstantial evidence suggests that Louis had actively promoted a Clisson regency in the hope of adding the duchy of Brittany to his extensive network of alliances. Philip was determined to prevent it. Charles VI had relapsed into his old incapacity in July 1402 and, apart from a fortnight in early October, remained 'absent' for the next seven months. For the first time a major decision had to be made in Paris without reference to him. In the last week of August 1402 the Duke of Orléans returned to the capital from Coucy and procured the despatch in the King's name of a testy letter to the baronage of Brittany urging them to get on with the business of appointing Clisson as regent. But Louis had underestimated the strength of the opposition to Clisson in Brittany itself, especially among the officials of the late duke and the noblemen who had served him against the house of Blois during the civil wars. They distrusted the ex-Constable and feared that once in power he would pursue the grudges accumulated over thirty years of dynastic conflict. They responded to the royal letters by pressing the Duke of Burgundy to intervene. For three weeks in September 1402 Philip called in all his favours among the princes and politicians about the King. There were prolonged discussions between Philip and the leading councillors and officers of the King in the castles of Melun and Corbeil and at Jean II de Montaigu's mansion at Marcoussis until he finally got his way.

Towards the end of September Philip left for Brittany to take control of the duchy. He entered Nantes on 1 October 1402. He dazzled the duchess and the nobility by the magnificence of his suite and the grandeur of his manner, and showered them with gifts, banquets and flattery. On 19 October the Estates of Brittany gathered in the city. They agreed to appoint the Duke of Burgundy as guardian of the young John V and his three brothers Arthur, Gilles and Richard. Olivier de Clisson resisted these measures as best he could with the support of his kinsmen and allies. But a large majority of those present was against them. Clisson finally

submitted with ill grace and surrendered Nantes castle to Philip's officers. The Duke spent the next six weeks in Brittany dealing with the practical arrangements for the government of the duchy. The administration was placed under his control. The principal ducal castles were delivered up to his officers and garrisoned with French troops. Joan of Navarre was persuaded to surrender her dower lands in return for a money pension. In January 1403 she embarked with her two unmarried daughters on a fleet of English ships escorted by a magnificent cortège of noblemen sent out from England to fetch her. Philip of Burgundy had already left for Paris taking John V and two of his brothers with him.[15]

The change of regime in Brittany had an immediate impact on the duchy's relations with England. For as long as Joan of Navarre remained in Brittany open hostilities with England were avoided. There were many piratical incidents but both sides declared themselves willing in principle to make reparations for them. However, within weeks of Joan's departure, Brittany found itself in the front line of the maritime war. Trade to English ports abruptly ceased in February 1403, possibly on the orders of the Duke of Burgundy's officers. Breton seamen joined forces with those of other French ports and stepped up their attacks on English and Gascon shipping in the Bay of Biscay and the Channel. In the spring active steps were being taken to assemble a Breton fleet for operations against England itself.[16]

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The exclusion of Olivier de Clisson from the regency of Brittany was Philip of Burgundy's last notable triumph over his nephew. Within a few months the Duke of Orléans had finally achieved the dominant position within the French government that he had craved ever since his brother's first attack of insanity. Behind the closed doors of the Hôtel Saint-Pol and the princely mansions of the capital a great power struggle was in progress throughout the first half of 1403. Charles VI was ill again, as he had been for most of the past year. His recent relapses had been worse and longer than before. There were concerns for his life. Louis of Orléans' influence in council visibly grew as Charles's health deteriorated. He was the man of the future to whom the ambitious, the greedy and the simply realistic were inevitably drawn. The consensus was expressed by the clerk to the Parlement. He was no friend of Louis but thought that by right of birth and stature he was the 'natural' ruler of France in a way that could never be true of the King's elderly uncles. There had been a trial of strength at the beginning of the year when Louis de Sancerre, the valiant old Constable and companion of Du Guesclin,

resigned his office. The favoured candidate of the court was the Queen's brother, Louis of Bavaria. But the Duke of Orléans succeeded in imposing his ally Charles d'Albret in spite of the fact that he was, in the words of an indignant contemporary, 'lame, small, weak, and lacking in age, dignity or military experience'.[17]

The Dukes of Berry and Burgundy could see the direction of events and moved to pre-empt it. On about 25 April 1403 the King enjoyed a partial recovery. On the following day there occurred what was described as a meeting of the royal council, although no notice of it appears to have been given and the only persons present were the King, his two uncles, and the clerk. It approved three new ordinances making radical changes to the arrangements for the government of the realm. They abrogated the ordinances of 1393, which had provided for the Duke of Orléans to become regent in the event of the King's death, and provided instead that the Dauphin would succeed at once without a formal minority or regency. Until he was old enough to exercise his powers in person the government would be carried on in his name by the Queen with the support of the four royal dukes of Berry, Burgundy, Orléans and Bourbon and the rest of the royal council. Decisions of this body were to be made by the voices of the 'larger and wiser number'. Similar arrangements were to apply while the King was alive but 'absent' or otherwise incapable of conducting affairs of state. Any letters of Charles VI purporting to modify these provisions were declared to be void. At the same time the King agreed to marry two of his children into Philip of Burgundy's family. The Dauphin's hand was promised to Margaret, daughter of Philip's heir, John Count of Nevers, in spite of an earlier undertaking that he would marry a daughter of Louis of Orléans. The King's daughter Michelle would marry the Count of Nevers' eldest son Philip, who was destined to inherit the Burgundian empire after John's death. These ordinances were aimed at diluting the influence of the Duke of Orléans and the Queen. They would have instituted a system of collective decision-making which the Duke of Burgundy could hope to control in his lifetime, while the marriage alliances would ensure that his heirs would succeed to his influence at the centre of affairs in the next two generations.[18]

Louis of Orléans was out of Paris when the new ordinances were made but he returned as soon as he heard about them and set about turning the King round. On 7 May Charles was induced to confirm the rights granted to Louis under all earlier ordinances and to repeat his previous promise that the Dauphin should marry a daughter of the house of Orléans. Any past or future instrument prejudicing Louis' rights was declared to be null and void. The pliable king can

scarcely have been able to follow what was happening. Four days later, on the 11th, the King was made to issue a fresh ordinance at a meeting of the council at which only the Duke of Burgundy is recorded as being present. This declared that the letters procured by Louis on 7 May were inconsistent with those of 26 April, a state of affairs which was described as disruptive and intolerable. The letters of 7 May were accordingly to be treated as void. Who prevailed in this war of ordinance and counter-ordinance? In different ways both of the rivals did. Philip's most significant gain was the double betrothal of Charles's children to those of John of Nevers, which Charles refused to repudiate. But it was Louis who prevailed on the form of government in the King's 'absences'. None of the competing ordinances appears to have been put into effect or regarded as expressing the King's will. They were all ignored by subsequent legislation, which treated the political arrangements made in 1393 as still in force.[19]

What is clear is that from the summer of 1403 onwards the Duke of Orléans consistently got his way on critical issues which had hitherto divided the council. As always the most reliable indicator of the balance of power was the state of France's relations with the Avignon Pope. On the night of 11 March, after five years in which he had been blockaded by his adversaries in the papal palace at Avignon, Benedict XIII had escaped heavily disguised and found his way to the castle of the counts of Provence at Châteaurenard. His escape had been organised by the Aragonese ambassador with the assistance of Robert de Braquemont, Louis of Orléans' representative in the papal city. Protected by a large garrison, in territory that still recognised him, Benedict could now defy his enemies with impunity. In Paris Louis moved quickly to build upon his victory. On 15 May a council of the French Church gathered under the glazed eye of the King in the Hôtel Saint-Pol. It had been summoned before Benedict's escape in order to endorse the policy of withholding recognition from both popes which the Dukes of Burgundy and Berry had pursued for the past decade. But by the time it met Louis of Orléans was very obviously in control. He came armed with various declarations which his agents had extracted from Benedict XIII, in which the obstinate old man promised to mend his autocratic ways, to submit the whole question of the papal succession to a council of the whole Latin Church within a year and meanwhile to moderate the burden of papal taxation on the French Church. The Pope had not the least intention of performing these undertakings if he could avoid it. But they made the desired impression on the council in Paris. On 28 May Louis summoned before him at the Hôtel Saint-Pol a carefully selected delegation of

bishops who were loyal to him and to Benedict. They gave him a list of those who were in favour of restoring obedience to the Avignon Pope. Whether the names on the list were a majority we shall never know. Louis at once took them to his brother, who was recovering from his siesta in the cool darkness of the palace chapel. He presented him with the list. Charles agreed to recognise Benedict as Pope. Knowing the King's vacillating temperament Louis seized a crucifix from the altar and called on his brother to back up his decision with an oath. A notary was produced from Louis' entourage to record it. The proceedings were brought to an end with a sung *Te Deum* led by the King himself. The Dukes of Berry and Burgundy were not even consulted. When they learned that evening what had happened they were appalled. They did their best to change the King's mind. But Charles was immovable. The decision was proclaimed from the steps of Notre-Dame on 30 May 1403.[20]

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The Duke of Orléans' assumption of power in Paris quickly affected France's already tense relations with England. At the end of March 1403 Louis wrote another deliberately offensive letter to Henry IV and sent his herald across the Channel to deliver it. Louis accused the English King of usurping Richard II's crown and of deliberate cruelty and dishonesty towards Richard's widow. He publicly challenged the suggestion made in Henry's last letter that he had himself been one of the usurper's chief accomplices. He had never, he said, intended to support a *coup d'état* but had only wanted to help Henry recover the heritage of his father. Henry wrote back a month later with a rebuke for writing in a manner unworthy of a royal prince. There followed a leaden point-by-point rebuttal in which he lost no opportunity to rub in their past alliance, revealing fresh details of their cordial relations since his accession. It was not so much a correspondence as an exchange of manifestos. Henry's letter was delivered to the Duke of Orléans by Lancaster Herald at Coucy on 30 May 1403. Shortly after this, in June, planning began in Paris for the repudiation of the current truce and the reopening of the war with England. The French government envisaged simultaneous campaigns against English possessions in Calais and Gascony in the following spring. Three thousand men-at-arms and a thousand crossbowmen would be deployed on each front for five months plus a mobile reserve of 300 mounted men in Normandy and Picardy to fight off English coastal raids. In addition a large naval force was to be deployed off Calais to cut off supplies and reinforcements from England. A sailing fleet would be obtained by requisitioning and converting merchantmen in the French Atlantic

provinces. In addition it was also proposed to acquire the use of 'at least' thirty war galleys of which ten were expected to be contributed by the King of Castile under the current naval treaty with France. Louis of Orléans addressed letters to many German princes and noblemen, calling on them to contribute troops to the campaign.[21]

While this was going on in Paris the English and French ambassadors were meeting at Leulinghem for another round of negotiations on the confirmation and enforcement of the truce. The conference opened with the ill-tempered exchanges which had become normal on such occasions. Henry Bowet Bishop of Bath, who spoke for the English delegation, raised the question of the Duke of Orléans' challenge of the previous year and his more recent letter of March. What did all this signify? To write such things hardly seemed to be consistent with the truce which they had come to Leulinghem to discuss. Who was in charge in Paris? Was the Duke of Orléans acting on his own account? Or with the authority of the King? Or of the royal council? Until they received an answer to these questions, sealed by the King or the royal princes, the English were not prepared to proceed with the business of the conference. The French delegation was led by the experienced but abrasive Jean de Hangest and the President of the Chambre des Comptes, Jean de Montaigu Bishop of Chartres. They were extremely guarded. The French King's position, 'or at least the position of his council', Jean de Hangest replied, was that the truce of 1396 remained in force and that they would not be the ones to break it. All the royal princes were agreed upon that. The English asked for clarification. The French said they were unable to say more because of the incapacity of the King, who had relapsed into incoherence again at the beginning of the month. They thought that they might have a fuller answer in the following year, or earlier if he recovered earlier. Bowet's bluff had been called. He did not walk out. The maintenance of the truce was too important to the English King. On 27 June 1403 the two sides agreed to republish the truce of 1396 and made new arrangements to deal with claims arising out of the fighting at sea. Another month was passed in quarrelling over the unpaid ransom of John II, the unreturned dowry of Isabelle of France, compensation for prizes taken at sea, the release of prisoners captured in the fighting, the perennial issue of the application of the truce to Scotland and the diplomatic stomach cramps of Jean de Hangest by which the French, as their English opposite numbers saw it, tried to drag out the proceedings whenever they seemed to be approaching some sort of conclusion. None of these questions was resolved.[22]

The truth was that the French ambassadors at Leulinghem were looking over their shoulders at larger plans being made in Paris. In the margins of the conference the Bishop of Chartres and his colleagues were busy preparing a draft war budget. They costed the proposed military and naval operations against England at no less than 1,212,500 *livres*. This was an enormous sum. But it was not the limit of the Duke of Orléans' ambitions. He was also contemplating a major campaign in northern Italy under his own command during the autumn and winter. His father-in-law Gian Galeazzo Visconti had died suddenly at the height of his powers in September 1402, leaving his domains to be governed by his widow as regent for their under-age son. Louis feared for the future of the duchy of Milan and his own county of Asti, which were threatened with internal disintegration and attack from outside by Florence, the papacy and Ruprecht's Germany, all of them victims of Gian Galeazzo's twenty-year career of conquest.[23]

In the first half of July 1403 there was intense discussion between the royal dukes in Paris about how Louis' multiple wars were to be financed. The whole subject was exceptionally sensitive and their deliberations were veiled in secrecy. What is clear is that they agreed in principle that when the time came there would be a heavy new *taille*. The Duke of Burgundy might have been expected to object. In the event he did not. Instead he seems to have abandoned his long-standing attachment to the truce with England and acquiesced in the imposition of a tax very like the one that he had gone to such lengths to veto in 1402. Why? Part of the answer is that his political position in Paris was weaker than it had been a year earlier. But the main reason appears to be that he was bought off. Having resigned himself to the loss of his political influence he exacted a large increase in his drawings from the French royal treasury as the price of his complaisance. He ultimately got an enlarged pension for the current year of 100,000 *livres* and another 120,000 *livres* by way of a one-off grant from the treasury reserve. Almost all of this money was paid over between October 1403 and April 1404. From a strictly financial point of view it was an outstanding bargain. Philip obtained more in these months from the French royal treasury than in any comparable period of his life.[24]

It is obvious from the exchanges at Leulinghem that the English were profoundly suspicious of their French opposite numbers and doubted their good faith. They had good reason to, for the French government, while publicly adhering to the truce, was using the Bretons as surrogates to break it. During the summer of 1403 a fleet of armed merchantmen was assembled at Morlaix in north-western Brittany for service against the English: some thirty ships with 1,200

men-at-arms on board in addition to their crews. The scale of this venture and the identity of those involved leaves little doubt that it had the support of the French King's council. The principal captains were the Admiral of Brittany, Jean de Penhoet, and the captain of the ducal fortress at Brest, Guillaume du Châtel, a chamberlain of the Duke of Orléans who had been foremost in the lists at Montendre the year before. The Morlaix fleet did a great deal of damage. On 8 July 1403 it surprised an English raiding force which was lying at anchor in the harbour at Saint-Matthieu. The English tried to escape but the Bretons split their force into two divisions and headed them off, uttering terrible cries as they closed with the opposing ships. The ensuing fight lasted for six hours until the English ran out of ammunition. By then 500 of their crews had been killed in the fight and another 500 thrown into the sea and drowned. A thousand more were captured and ransomed. Forty English ships were reported to have been captured. Fresh from landing their prizes and prisoners the Bretons sailed again at about the beginning of August against the west of England. There they lay off the harbours waiting to attack ships entering or leaving. They landed and burned settlements, killing many of the inhabitants and carrying off others for ransom. On 9 August 1403 these operations came to a violent close when they penetrated Plymouth Sound in the early afternoon and landed their men about a mile from the town. The chronicler Thomas Walsingham's accusations of negligence may well have been justified, for nothing appears to have been done to interfere with the landings. The town was unwalled. The French approached it unobserved at nightfall and fell on it after dark, rapidly overwhelming the inhabitants. The whole night was passed in burning and looting. On the following morning they sailed away with many prisoners and several captured freighters as Sir Thomas Berkeley approached with the levies of the western counties. On their way home the Bretons landed on Guernsey and Jersey, causing more destruction and exacting heavy *patis* from the inhabitants. It was the worst coastal raid that England had suffered since the 1370s.[25]

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These events coincided with the gravest internal crisis of Henry IV's reign. In the spring of 1403 the Percies, Henry Earl of Northumberland and his son Harry Hotspur, who had taken the leading part in the revolution which put Henry on the throne in 1399, resolved to break with him. Their reasons reveal much about the English King's failings as a political manager. The Percies had been the dominant territorial magnates of the north for nearly a

century. For most of the reign of Richard II they had enjoyed almost viceregal powers in the north as wardens of the east march, and in the aftermath of Henry IV's coup of 1399 in the west march, Cheshire and north Wales as well. They owed their power in the region to personal factors which it was not easy for outsiders to match: their immense landholdings in Yorkshire, Northumberland and Cumberland, their possession of some of the principal private fortresses of the north, their familiarity with border society on both sides and the intense tribal loyalty which these highly successful warriors inspired among their tenants, allies and followers. In the words of the fifteenth-century chronicler of the region, himself a Percy retainer, they 'have the hertes of the people by north and ever had'. They had become indispensable. When Richard II had briefly attempted at the end of his reign to exclude them from the wardenship, his nominee the Duke of Aumale had bluntly told him that it was impossible to govern the north without them.[26]

In 1403 the Percies had a number of reasons to feel that their worth was not being recognised. One was Henry IV's attempt to balance their power by promoting the interests of the Nevilles, the other great noble house of the north. Ralph Neville Earl of Westmorland was the King's brother-in-law and had been close to him for many years. At the time of Henry's accession Westmorland was one of the great territorial magnates of the north with important holdings on both sides of the Pennines. In the north-east, where the Percy interests were concentrated, his power was visibly growing. He was already much the largest landowner in the palatine county of Durham. Shortly after the King's coronation he had been granted the immense honour of Richmond in Yorkshire, traditionally a possession of the Dukes of Brittany, which had previously been farmed or leased to the Percies. He acquired control of the border fortresses of Wark and Bamburgh in Northumberland, where the Percies had once been the sole military power. The removal of Hotspur in 1402 from the command of Roxburgh, the last surviving royal fortress in southern Scotland apart from Berwick, was a symbolic act. Roxburgh stood in territory where the Percies had ancient claims and large ambitions. Hotspur's replacement was the Earl of Westmorland.

The Percies' resentment of the Nevilles' growing status in the north was aggravated by their precarious financial position. They had personally borne much of the heavy burden of funding the defence of the Scottish and Welsh marches. Henry IV was tardy in repaying them, the result of his own acute financial problems. In July 1401 Hotspur reckoned that the arrears owed to him and his father had reached £5,000. Two years later they had risen fourfold

to £20,000. The Percies were immensely rich, but cash was scarce and their lack of it demeaned them in the face of their followers. As the Earl wrote to Henry in June 1403, unless his fees and expenses were paid 'the chivalry of your realm will be discredited in these parts and I and my son, who are your loyal lieges, will be dishonoured'. It did not help that the Percies' tallies from the Exchequer were frequently dishonoured, whereas their Neville rival had so far experienced no difficulty in getting his own tallies paid. After the victory at Humbleton Hill, Northumberland and Hotspur and their followers had been covered in praise and honour but little if anything had been done to clear their arrears and their hopes of rich war profits had been dashed by Henry's refusal to let them ransom the more valuable prisoners. Hotspur refused to comply with the King's order to surrender the Earl of Douglas to him, an issue which was still unresolved. Medieval government was based on a combination of sentiment and bluff. The mental barrier to rebellion had been weakened by the events of 1399. One *coup d'état* by its nature encourages another. The Percies resolved to seize their chance to control the power of the Crown in their own interest.[27]

In about April 1403 Hotspur assembled the Percy tenants and retainers and invaded Teviotdale in Lothian, one of the domains of the Earl of Douglas which had been granted to him by Henry IV after the battle of Humbleton Hill. He laid siege to Cocklaws castle at Ormiston, near Hawick. In May the defenders of this place agreed to surrender it on 1 August unless it was relieved before then by King Robert or the Duke of Albany. There are many odd features of this campaign. There is good reason to think that it was a charade plotted between the Percies and the Earl of Douglas to cover the assembly of a large army without arousing suspicion. Cocklaws was an insignificant stone peel defended by a small garrison. Indeed the Duke of Albany had some difficulty in persuading the general council of Scotland that it was worth relieving. Hotspur also brought Douglas himself on the campaign, although it was ostensibly directed against his domains, and allowed him to recruit troops among his followers in the region. It seems likely that the two men had done a deal by which Douglas traded his liberty for his military and political support against Henry IV. Hotspur had other supporters too. He had obtained sealed letters from prominent English lords, which the chronicler John Hardyng claimed to have seen, pledging their support for a rebellion to overthrow the King.[28]

While the Percies were in Scotland they opened negotiations with Owen Glendower using one of Hotspur's Welsh squires as a go-between. In July Glendower embarked on an offensive in Carmarthenshire which was probably concerted with Hotspur. The

Welsh of the region rose in a body and thousands came to join him. At Llandovery, the nationalist leader mustered 8,240 men, the largest army that he would ever command. They captured Newcastle Emlyn and the royal castle at Carmarthen, one of the oldest English towns in Wales and the administrative centre of the south-west. English officials in Wales despaired. From the walls of Brecon castle one of them reported that the 'whole Welsh nation' was in arms. The border counties were gripped with panic. Writing to the King on 8 July the archdeacon of Hereford begged him to come in person to rescue the situation. 'For God's love, my liege lord, thinketh on yourself and your estate or by my trouth all is lost else.' In fact the alarm was probably overdone. Glendower lost 600 of his men in an ambush and was forced to abandon Carmarthen. Shortly afterwards Brecon castle was relieved by a force sent from Herefordshire. Henry IV declined to intervene. He was on his way north. Suspicious perhaps of what was going on in the north, he had evidently decided to take control over Hotspur's campaign in Scotland and apparently proposed to join him outside Cocklaws. The King had reached Nottingham when he learned that the Percies had risen in rebellion.[29]

Hotspur had withdrawn from Cocklaws into Northumberland with his army. From here he marched on Chester, his old headquarters, accompanied by a handful of men, no more than 200 according to one account, including the Earl of Douglas and a company of his followers. Hotspur had acquired a large following in Cheshire and north Wales during the Welsh rising. He counted on being able to raise a new army there. He had apparently agreed to join Glendower on the banks of the Severn near Shrewsbury. His father would follow, bringing with him the army of Cocklaws and whatever additional troops could be raised among the Percy tenants and followers in Northumberland and Yorkshire. The sixteen-year-old Prince of Wales had recently been appointed as the King's lieutenant in Wales. He had established his headquarters at Shrewsbury. The third Percy, Northumberland's brother Thomas Earl of Worcester, was with him there. He was the Prince's guardian and tutor and a highly influential figure in the counsels of the King. They had a small army under their command, about 600 men-at-arms and rather more than 3,000 archers who had been recruited in the Welsh marches for service against Glendower. When the news arrived of Hotspur's approach, Worcester made off to join him at Chester. About a third of the army at Shrewsbury defected and went with him.

On 10 July 1403 Hotspur raised his flag at Chester. From here he published two manifestos. One was directed to potential supporters

in England and was sent to them in sealed letters. In this document Hotspur presented himself as a reformer. He was acting, he said, in the public interest in order to reform the government, install wise and loyal councillors and stop the frivolous waste of tax revenues by Henry's officials. The other was addressed to Hotspur's own army and the military community of Cheshire, who had been Richard II's most powerful and consistent supporters in his lifetime. To them he presented himself as a revolutionary. He announced that Richard II was alive and was with his father in the north-east. They were raising an army there which would shortly join him to challenge the usurpation of 'Henry of Lancaster'. Hotspur knew well enough that Richard was dead. The real object, as he admitted to his intimates, was to put the eleven-year-old Edmund Mortimer Earl of March on the throne. The young Earl had the aura of legitimacy in England as the descendant of the senior surviving line of Edward III. He also had a strong appeal for Hotspur's Welsh allies. His family were major landowners in Wales but unlike other marcher lords had intermarried with the native princely families. The Earl's uncle, Edmund Mortimer, had become the partisan and son-in-law of Glendower. In a short time Hotspur raised a large army from the men of Chester and north Wales. Contemporary estimates gave him 14,000 men. The figure is certainly exaggerated but Hotspur probably had the largest army currently in the field. They included many of the surviving members of Richard II's Cheshire guard, office-holders of the late King who had been excluded from favour after his deposition and many others who had lost out in the tumults of the past two decades.[30]

3 The Percy rebellion, June–July 1403

Hotspur's creation of an army from nothing was a tribute to his skill as a soldier and propagandist and to his famously affable personality. But from the moment that he had done it things began to go wrong. The Earl of Northumberland's efforts in the north-east took longer than expected. Left to his own devices Hotspur decided to advance against the Prince at Shrewsbury without waiting for his father. His plan was probably to defeat the Prince before Henry IV could reach him with reinforcements, and then join forces with Owen Glendower to confront the King. The movements of the Welsh leader at this point are particularly obscure but according to one

report a large body of Welsh wearing Richard II's insignia on their tunics was making for Lichfield as if to head off the King. Henry IV reached Burton on Trent on about 16 July 1403 and for the first time sized up the rebellion. He summoned men from all the counties of the Midlands to join him on the road. But George Dunbar, who was with him, urged him not to wait for them but to make straight for Shrewsbury with only the men he had about him. They could deal with the Welsh later.

The King reached Shrewsbury on 20 July 1403, just before Hotspur, and joined forces with his son. On the following morning they drew up their combined army in battle array and advanced against the rebels, who were encamped about three miles north of them by the village now known as Battlefield. Hotspur and his men were taken by surprise. There was a brief pause while both sides tried to negotiate. But Henry and Dunbar were determined to fight before Hotspur had time to recover and array his forces. They cut the talking short and attacked. It was a bloody fight between two English armies with similar tactics and weapons. Both sides suffered heavy casualties from the opening volleys of the bowmen. The Prince was severely injured by an arrow in the face which penetrated six inches into his head. Thirty-six knights of the King's personal retinue were killed around him. The royalists initially fell back. Some of them broke ranks and fled the field. Hoping to seize the advantage of the moment, Hotspur and Douglas gathered their men and charged what they thought was the King's standard. But Henry IV had two doubles in the host and was quickly removed from danger by his companions. The charge was brought to a halt and Hotspur and Douglas found themselves trapped in the midst of the enemy army. 'Henry Percy King', some of his men cried. But at that moment Hotspur was struck and fell to the ground. Henry shouted out that Hotspur was dead. The cry was taken up and passed through the ranks on both sides. The rebel army began to melt away. Douglas, a huge man clearly visible across the battlefield, struck left and right about him and was one of the last to be captured. Wounded in the genitals, he became a prisoner for the second time in a year. All the surviving rebel leaders were captured. On the following morning 1,847 dead were counted on the field. Another 3,000 corpses had fallen in the pursuit, their bodies scattered over a distance of three miles from the site of the battle. The body of Hotspur was pulled out of the mass of corpses and put on display. The Earl of Worcester was taken to see it and broke down and wept. On the next day he was summarily condemned for treason and beheaded together with two of Hotspur's Cheshire lieutenants.[31]

A week after the battle the Duke of Albany appeared with a large Scottish army outside Cocklaws, thus releasing the garrison from their undertaking to surrender. In England what remained of the rebel cause quickly collapsed. The Earl of Northumberland's efforts ended in fiasco. The army that he had commanded in Scotland consisted mainly of borderers from Northumberland, many of whom would not fight against the King. The Earl had found more recruits in Yorkshire, the real heartland of his family. But the mustering arrangements were confused and many of them were unable to discover where he was. Eventually the Earl collected all the men he could find and tried to join his son at Chester in time for the decisive battle. Marching south, he found his route blocked by a loyalist force under his arch-rival the Earl of Westmorland. He retreated to Newcastle but found the gates of the town closed in his face. The townsmen would only allow him to enter for the night with a small retinue, leaving the rest of his army outside the walls. Believing that they were about to be betrayed, the men mutinied. Next day the Earl abandoned the fight and fled to the Percy castle at Warkworth.[32]

At the beginning of August 1403 the Earl of Northumberland came before the King at Pontefract, the great fortress of the dukes of Lancaster in Yorkshire where Richard II had been murdered. The Earl, who was in his sixty-second year, was a broken man. He submitted to the King and promised to surrender all his castles in the north of England in return for his life and 'sufficient' honour. Henry stripped him of all his offices and held him under guard while his council considered what to do with him. But his fortresses continued to hold out for several months even when presented with written orders to surrender under the Earl's seal. Henry's officers were obliged to engage in patient negotiations with the garrisons of the great Percy strongholds at Alnwick and Warkworth and a number of smaller castles including Cockermouth, where most of the Scottish prisoners of Humbleton Hill were being held. At Berwick, which was a royal fortress but held by a Percy garrison, the captain, Sir William Clifford, set out his demands in impudent detail. They reflected a characteristic mixture of self-interest and Percy loyalism: a pardon for Clifford and his men; the garrison to be paid its arrears; the Percy domains to be preserved for the benefit of Hotspur's nine-year-old son Henry; and Clifford himself to have custody of both Berwick and the young Henry. These issues were not resolved until the following year.[33]

When at the end of the battle Henry IV had sent to the veteran Lancastrian magnate Sir John Stanley for his advice on how to treat the defeated army Stanley, who had been wounded by an arrow in

the neck, is said to have replied, ‘rattelynge in the throte’, ‘Burn and slay! Burn and slay!’ Yet when it came to it the King’s vengeance was brief and muted. The heads of Hotspur and Thomas Percy were taken to London and impaled above the gatehouse of London Bridge. Their lands were confiscated and part of them used to endow the real hero of the battle, George Dunbar, who had proved himself to be Henry’s ablest commander in the short time since his flight from Scotland. Most of the rebel dead forfeited their property and the county of Cheshire was fined 3,000 marks plus an extra 300 marks on the city of Chester. Apart from the two defeated captains at Shrewsbury, a handful of ringleaders and a hermit who had preached in favour of the pseudo-Richard at York were executed. But most of the rebels received a royal pardon. They included the Earl of Northumberland, the greatest of them all, who was eventually pardoned at the request of the Parliamentary Commons. He was restored to his domains and left in control of all his fortresses in the north, some of which were still holding out against the King’s forces. The Commons declared that they regarded the Earl’s conduct as treasonable. But they remembered his valiant service against the Scots and were plainly frightened by the thought that the north might be lost. Henry IV could afford to be magnanimous. As the events of the following years would show, the power of the Percies was broken for a generation.[34]

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On 14 October 1403 the Duke of Orléans addressed his last epistle to the English King, this time addressing him as ‘Henry of Lancaster’. It was a rambling, eccentric and self-indulgent document in which Louis proclaimed himself the champion of his insulted niece Isabelle of France and of all of French womanhood. ‘If I have loved them and they have loved me,’ he added, ‘then the stock of love has risen and I am grateful and glad of it.’ He formally defied Henry IV, repudiating whatever bonds might once have existed between them, and declared his intention of attacking England as soon as an opportunity arose. Louis’ previous letters to Henry IV had been couched as declarations of private war in the belief that this would not engage the responsibility of the French state or involve the repudiation of the truce. But by now the pretence this was a purely personal vendetta was wearing thin. As the English Chancellor told Parliament the following January, Louis’ letters were ‘a great outrage, a disgrace to our lord the King and a shame and offence to the whole realm’. In spite of its highly personal and undiplomatic tone, the latest letter was clearly conceived by its author as a public act. He directed the clerk of the Parlement of

Paris to register it among the royal ordinances. The clerk was surprised and indignant. ‘Prolix, windy and devoid of judgment or consequence’, he wrote in the margin of the register, ‘and why now?’[35]

If the clerk had known more about what was happening in the French King’s council he could have answered his own question ‘why now?’ Louis of Orléans left for his domains on the Loire in mid-October 1403 and passed the rest of the year in the Rhône valley negotiating with Benedict XIII and preparing his campaign in northern Italy. But in Paris the King’s councillors were actively engaged in planning the double campaign against Gascony and Calais intended for the following spring. In Brittany and the Channel ports, ships were being requisitioned and armed for war. One of Louis of Orléans’ chamberlains, Charles de Savoisy, was on his way to Castile to hire more. Meanwhile the French suspended all diplomatic contacts with England. When the English ambassadors arrived in Calais in November 1403 for talks with the representatives of France and Flanders they found that there was no one to talk to. They tried to make contact with the French delegation but their letters were left unanswered for weeks. Discussion with the Four Members about a separate treaty with Flanders were taken over by the Duke of Burgundy and buried.[36]

The French were generally ill-informed about English domestic politics but they did take notice of the Percy rebellion. The brief civil war opened their eyes to the vulnerability of Henry IV’s government at home and the significance of the Welsh rebellion. The French government had employed Welsh mercenaries for many years but they knew very little about Wales. The country was far away and even less accessible than Scotland. So far they had taken little interest in Owen Glendower. But this was about to change. In August 1403 a small squadron of ships sailed from France to make contact with the Welsh leader. The absence of any trace of this expedition in the French records suggests that it may have been a private enterprise of its captain, a knight called Jean d’Espagne, who in spite of his name was apparently a Breton. Towards the end of the month he reached south Wales and landed a company of at least 200 French and Breton soldiers. At the beginning of October the constable of the Lancastrian castle at Kidwelly on the Carmarthenshire coast recorded their arrival and reported that they had joined forces with Henry Don, one of the leaders of the rebellion in south Wales. They had already destroyed the extensive unwalled suburbs of Kidwelly and forced an entry into the borough below the castle.[37]

The French arrived in Wales at a low point of English fortunes

there. Henry IV had recently been in Carmarthenshire but had been forced by want of funds to withdraw from the country less than a fortnight after entering it. The castles on which the English depended to hold down the country and defend their colonies were in a bad state. The garrison of Carmarthen, the largest in Wales, was unpaid and refusing to serve beyond the term of its indentures. Other important garrisons were poorly supplied and seriously below strength. Caernarvon, on the Menai Strait, the centre of English administration in north-west Wales, was supposed to be defended by at least a hundred men but had fewer than forty. Harlech, which been under loose siege for several months, was defended by just five Englishmen and sixteen Welsh. Aberystwyth, also under siege, was reported to be on the verge of surrender for want of money, stores and men. These immense fortresses, masterpieces of military architecture constructed by the engineers of Edward I at the end of the thirteenth century, were designed to be defended by relatively small numbers of men on the assumption that they could be rapidly reinforced and resupplied by sea in emergencies. This calculation was rudely disturbed by the appearance of Jean d'Espagne's squadron with its complement of soldiers. At the beginning of November 1403 he re-embarked his men and sailed north to the Menai Strait to support the Welsh siege of Caernarvon.[38]

Henry IV's response to the growing threat from France was constrained by his penury and his weak political position. His first instinct was to turn to privateers. On 26 August 1403 the King wrote to the bailiffs of all the leading privateering ports declaring that the Bretons, whom he had previously regarded as friends, were now to be treated as hostile and attacked wherever they could be found. In the following weeks a large fleet of armed privateers was assembled in the West Country ports: Bristol, Saltash, Fowey, Plymouth and Dartmouth. Their leaders were three prominent businessmen, John Hawley the elder, William Wilford of Exeter and Thomas Norton, reputed to be the richest merchant in Bristol. In about the middle of October they sailed against Brittany. In the course of this prodigiously destructive cruise the English captured ten ships off Finistère and another thirty which were found sheltering at Belle-Île laden with wine from La Rochelle. The crews were massacred, some of the ships sunk and the rest taken back to England with their cargoes. Many more were caught and sunk as they fled along the coast. At least eight of the captured ships were Castilian freighters carrying cargoes belonging to neutral merchants whose claims were to be a bone of contention between the Crown and the western seamen for years. Heading back with their spoil, the English completed their campaign with a series of attacks on

coastal settlements in Finistère. They landed at Penmarch, burning the town and penetrating fifteen miles inland to destroy villages and manors. The famous victualling station at Saint-Matthieu a few miles north was destroyed. The garrison of Brest came out to challenge the invaders, supported by a large number of Bretons recruited inland, but were driven off with heavy casualties.[39]

The English King was usually well-informed about what the French were doing. Ships were sent out to report on concentrations of shipping in French ports. The German Emperor's ambassadors told him about Louis of Orléans' efforts to recruit mercenaries in Germany and gave him a copy of one of his letters. At least one well-placed English spy reported regularly from Paris. Everything that happened in the French royal council, the English diplomats at Leulinghem unwisely boasted to their French opposite numbers, was at once reported to them. It was from this source that Henry's council learned, probably in October 1403, about fresh operations at sea planned by the Count of Saint-Pol.[40]

Waleran Count of Saint-Pol was the leading territorial magnate of Picardy and the captain of the permanent French army which was stationed in a great arc from Gravelines to Boulogne to contain the English garrisons of Calais. He was a man with a past to live down. As a young prisoner of war in England in the 1370s he had married Richard II's half-sister and done homage to the English King for his French domains. In 1379 he had been involved in an abortive attempt to put English garrisons into a number of castles in Picardy and Vermandois. Returning to France on the accession of Charles VI in 1380 he received a royal pardon, but many felt that he was lucky not to have been executed. In 1403 Saint-Pol instituted a blockade of Calais. He stopped overland traffic to the town through Picardy and Flanders, forbade French merchants to have any dealings there and ordered English ones to be arrested on the roads. He also sponsored privateering operations against English shipping in the Channel from the Flemish port of Gravelines in conjunction with professional corsairs from Flanders and Scotland. By October his ambitions had grown larger. He established a base at Le Crotoy at the mouth of the Somme. Here he recruited ships and seamen, mainly from Brittany, and soldiers from Picardy and Flanders, and laid in stores for a long campaign against coastal settlements in England. Shortly afterwards, finding that he had not enough ships, he moved his base to the great centre of French privateering at Harfleur in the estuary of the Seine, where he was able to increase his fleet to about 200 vessels.[41]

On 9 November 1403, taking a leaf out of Louis of Orléans' book, Saint-Pol wrote a letter of defiance to Henry IV in which he

declared his intention of attacking England. He claimed that as Richard II's kinsman and former ally he had a personal vendetta against the man who had murdered and supplanted him. By portraying his venture in this way Saint-Pol no doubt hoped to enable the French government to disclaim responsibility when the English complained, as they inevitably did. Henry IV regarded Saint-Pol's venture as a serious threat. He was not deceived by his profession to be acting on his own initiative. The English ambassadors at Calais wrote a long protest to Philip of Burgundy. They found it hard to believe, they declared with self-conscious irony, that these things had been authorised by the King of France or his council and least of all by those such as Philip himself who had personally sworn to observe the truce in 1396.[42]

In England lessons were being learned from the debacle at Plymouth. During October, as reports came in from Calais of Saint-Pol's activities, coast-guards were mobilised in the maritime counties, regional commanders assigned to them and beacons prepared on cliff-tops for the first time in more than two decades. Two new admirals were appointed, the King's half-brother Sir Thomas Beaufort for the east coast and Sir Thomas Berkeley for the south and west. Berkeley, who bore the brunt of the defence against Saint-Pol's fleet, was a flamboyant soldier, a munificent patron of fighting men, and an enthusiast for the war at sea who had once commissioned his own war barge. He knew how to work with professional seamen and forged a strong relationship with Harry Pay, the notorious corsair of Poole. Berkeley proved to be one of the more effective sea commanders of the age. Over the winter of 1403–4 some 260 requisitioned merchantmen were put at his disposal. About a third of these were concentrated at Dartmouth to confront Saint-Pol at sea while the rest were assigned to the defence of individual harbours.[43]

At the beginning of November 1403 Saint-Pol sailed from Harfleur. He did not make straight for England as he had been expected to do. Instead he took his fleet south across the Bay of Biscay and into the Gironde. There he blockaded the city of Bordeaux, while on land French troops attempted to choke off the flow of goods reaching Bordeaux through the river valleys. Further south the Count of Armagnac was reported to be raising money and troops to invade the valley of the Adour towards Bayonne. These concerted operations, together with the concurrent blockade of Calais, were conceived as a softening-up exercise for the campaign planned for the following spring. They were designed to force England's three major coastal strongholds in France to run down their food stocks in advance of a French siege. Leaving most of his

ships in the Gironde, Saint-Pol returned to Harfleur at about the end of the month. From here on 4 December he sailed for England with twenty-nine large armed barges carrying 1,500 men-at-arms in addition to their crews and some companies of crossbowmen. After two days at sea they arrived off the Hampshire coast on 6 December. Their objective was probably Southampton. But they were unable to penetrate the Solent because a large naval force was concentrated there waiting to escort the annual wine fleet to Bordeaux. So the French landed instead on the Isle of Wight. Several of Saint-Pol's companions were dubbed as knights as they disembarked and gathered on the foreshore. But they found no one to do battle with. The inhabitants had abandoned their homes and fled to the security of Carisbrook castle or hidden in the densely wooded interior of the island. The invaders began to burn the villages of the coast and round up cattle. Eventually a priest came before them to discuss a ransom treaty. But the negotiations dragged on. By 9 December, before they were complete, the English had managed to collect enough troops for a counter-attack. Saint-Pol drew up his men in battle array. But as Berkeley's ships began to appear off the coast, threatening his line of retreat, he thought better of it. Hastily abandoning his spoil Saint-Pol re-embarked his men.[44]

For the next three weeks the whereabouts of Saint-Pol's fleet was unknown. The English King's ministers believed that a large army was waiting somewhere on the French coast in preparation for a fresh landing on a much larger scale. They sent six ships to scour the ocean for sightings and a spy to listen out for gossip in France, all without success. In the English counties the old Ricardian loyalists were stirred by the spectacle of a government in disarray and by the usual heady mix of rumour, garbled reports and fantasy. Maud de Vere Countess of Oxford, the widow of Richard II's favourite of the 1380s, was convinced that Saint-Pol would land with an army at Harwich at the end of December and that he would be accompanied by the Duke of Orléans and Queen Isabelle. At her manor at Bentley in Suffolk she and her friends and household, according to the prosecution at her subsequent trial, were making ready to destroy the warning beacons set up on the coast and guide the invaders to Northampton where they were expected to join with the forces of the pseudo-Richard II.[45]

A few days before Christmas 1403 a great council met at Westminster to take stock of the crisis. The assembly had been planned as a show of unity in the face of what seemed to be a concerted French attempt to provoke fresh rebellions in England and Wales. All of the peers and prelates present renewed their oaths

of fealty to Henry IV and his descendants. They swore to 'live and die with him against all persons in the world'. A group of French heralds, who were at Westminster on diplomatic business, were invited to attend as observers. A few days later, on 28 December, the King's permanent councillors met in the London mansion of the Countess of Salisbury to review the defences of southern England. They called on a group of experienced shipmasters to advise them. The meeting decided to reinforce Berkeley's fleet and man it with double crews so that they could operate in shifts. A smaller squadron was to be sent south to Guernsey to seek out Saint-Pol's fleet in the inlets of Brittany. Ultimately Berkeley was expected to have 1,000 men-at-arms, 2,100 archers and 5,000 seamen under his command.[46]

In fact, although the council did not know it, the danger had already passed. Baulked of their spoil on the Isle of Wight, Saint-Pol's ships had looted their way down the coast of Normandy before stopping to winter at Barfleur. His commercial backers had wasted the money that they had invested in victuals and equipment and had taken hardly any spoil. They decided to cut their losses and abandon the venture. Saint-Pol himself was received with mockery and embarrassment when he appeared in Paris to join the celebrations at court over Christmas. Henry IV learned most of this in the new year. His own naval forces were temporarily stood down and a herald was sent to France with a sarcastic message expressing his disappointment that the Count had not stayed long enough in England for Henry to attend to him in person. Later, in February 1404, the Calais garrison wreaked revenge on Saint-Pol's domains in Picardy, looting and burning them for four days before returning to Calais with so many cattle that it was necessary to build a large temporary stockade outside the walls in which to hold them. In the following month Sir Thomas Berkeley was commissioned to hold the Channel for another three months with 21 ships, 300 men-at-arms and 600 archers. The cost of these operations was prodigious. The council estimated that Berkeley's fleet would cost nearly £15,000 over the winter. Much of this was borne in the first instance by Berkeley himself. He sold his Essex estates in order to help fund the venture.[47]

The Count of Saint-Pol was a braggart with ample resources and strong political support but no clear idea of what he was trying to achieve apart from fame. By comparison Jean d'Espagne's tiny force in Wales won no fame, for it was ignored by all the French chroniclers. Yet it made a significant contribution to the operations of Glendower and his captains over the winter of 1403–4. His men passed more than two months at Caernarvon, engaged in the siege

of Edward I's mighty fortress on the Menai Strait. They wasted much of Anglesey, from which Caernarvon was usually supplied. They captured the English sheriff as he was proceeding with a large armed escort on his rounds and sent him as a prisoner to Glendower. By January 1404 the garrison of Caernarvon was desperate. The Constable got a woman to carry a message through the siege lines ('because no man dared to do it'). She reported that the French and Welsh had begun to assault the fortress with stone-throwers, wheeled shelters (or 'sows') and extensible ladders. The Welsh never took Caernarvon, even with French help. But the garrison of Harlech finally agreed in February to sell out unless relieved within a short time limit. The circumstances of its fall are not recorded but Jean d'Espagne's ships and troops are known to have participated in the later stages of the siege. Towards the end of April, they were taking part in an extremely destructive Welsh raid into Shropshire which was said to have wasted a third of the county and provoked large-scale emigration from the region. Shortly afterwards Sir Thomas Berkeley arrived with a fleet fitted out in Bristol. His orders were to resupply the beleaguered garrisons of north and west Wales and expel the French squadron. In this he seems to have succeeded, for nothing more is heard of Jean d'Espagne. The probability is that after maintaining itself in Wales for seven months the French expeditionary force returned home in May 1404. They brought with them to France Glendower's chancellor, Griffin Young, and his brother-in-law, John Hanmer. They were charged to make a formal alliance between the Welsh leader and the King of France.[48]

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At New Year 1404 the French royal princes gathered in Paris at a court without a King. Charles VI had been 'absent' since shortly before Christmas. It was the traditional season for exchanging gifts and planning the military operations of the coming year. The full council assembled on 7 January 1404 to consider the war with England. The Duke of Orléans did not attend. Ever changeable, headstrong but easily disheartened, Louis had by now abandoned his plans to invade Italy and paid off the army that he had assembled in the Rhône valley. But he was detained in Avignon by difficult discussions with Benedict XIII and did not return to Paris until the following month. However, the critical decisions had already been agreed in the previous summer and reflected Louis' agenda. The next major conference with the English was due to open at Leulinghem on 1 March 1404 and according to the French reckoning their commitment to observe the truce would expire three

weeks later on the 20th. The council decided that it would not be renewed. As soon as it expired they planned to make war on England on several fronts. The main military operations would be the long-planned campaigns against the remaining English possessions in Calais and Gascony. But a third army was now envisaged, to be sent to Wales to support Owen Glendower. According to Henry IV's informants the council also resolved to send embassies in search of assistance to Scotland, Milan and Brittany in addition to the embassy of Charles de Savoisy which was already active in Aragon and Castile. To pay for all this activity the new *taille* agreed between the princes in July was now confirmed and fixed at 800,000 *livres*, the largest imposition of its kind since the tax had been devised in the 1380s. It would be collected, they decreed, at the end of April. These decisions were eventually ratified by the King when he recovered his faculties towards the end of January. The *taille* was duly proclaimed on 30 January. The three royal dukes present swore to see it spent exclusively on the war, apart from 200,000 *livres* which was earmarked for the King of Navarre in return for the cession to the Crown of the fortress-port of Cherbourg. The Duke of Orléans, they declared, would in due course swear the same oath.[49]

Reports of the proceedings at the French council meeting had already reached England when, a week later, Parliament opened at Westminster. The Chancellor's opening address was filled with foreboding. He recited the recent events in Wales and Scotland, the rebellion of the Percies, the assumption of power by the Duke of Orléans in France, the raiding fleet assembled by the Count of Saint-Pol and the threat to Calais and Gascony. The deliberations of both houses were overshadowed by reports coming in daily of 'enemies and rebels'. The Commons believed that at any moment a fresh rebellion might break out, forcing a dissolution of Parliament as the King and the lords were called away to deal with it. They repeated for a third time since 1399 their oaths of fealty. But any impression of unity was undermined by the Commons' brutal attack on the King's management of his finances. They were convinced, as so many of their predecessors had been, that if properly husbanded the customs and the revenues of the royal demesne together with the treasure left by Richard II would be enough to fund the whole cost of the war in Wales, the defence of the Scottish border, the protection of the coast against French fleets and the suppression of internal rebellion. The King, they complained, had authorised profligate expenditure on grants to favourites and 'various ladies' and on repaying borrowings from his Italian bankers, while his castles went unrepaired and his troops unpaid. There was some

truth in the accusation that Henry's household expenditure was extravagant and that his grants were excessive. But the Commons' concerns were exaggerated. Their belief that the cost of defence could be met without general taxation was completely unrealistic, just as it had been when they had uttered the same complaints in the 1370s and 1380s. In the event all that they were willing to vote by way of taxation was a tax on incomes from land amounting to just £12,000, less than a third of the value of a standard Parliamentary subsidy. Moreover the proceeds were required to be paid not to the treasury but to a special commission of war treasurers answerable to the Commons. The commission, comprising a clerk and three London businessmen, was charged to disburse the money exclusively on defence. This parsimony was borne of distrust of the King's competence and of his servants' honesty. But it left England perilously exposed to the most significant threat from France for two decades.[50]

It was not that the Commons were under any illusions about the reality of the threat. Much of February was passed in drawing up a great remonstrance in the name of King, Lords and Commons, addressed to the 'prelates, peers, lords spiritual and temporal and the whole community of France'. This was a long protest against the conduct of the French over the past year: the challenges of the Duke of Orléans and the Count of Saint-Pol, the attacks on England and Bordeaux over the winter, and the suspension of diplomatic contact since the previous autumn. If the truce broke down and more Christian blood was spilled, they declared, it would be France's doing, not England's. The document pointed out that the English ambassadors were at Calais waiting for the conference fixed for 1 March to open, but there had been no sign of a French embassy and the English delegation's letters were still unanswered. Were they going to attend or not? Parliament's remonstrance was intended as a direct appeal to the French political community, an attempt to sidestep the personal animosity to Henry IV among the royal princes which had undermined four years of frustrating and inconclusive diplomacy. The task of delivering it was entrusted to the Gloucestershire knight Sir John Cheyne, who had served on the King's council and had been four times Speaker of the Commons. His instructions were to take it to Paris and deliver it in person to the French royal council. Henry IV, perhaps unrealistically, expected great things of Cheyne's mission. He ordered the captains of the fortresses on the march of Calais to refrain from all hostilities during the two months which it was expected to take, except for those directed against the Count of Saint-Pol personally. But the herald sent to apply for a safe-conduct was turned back by the

French captain of Boulogne and the Count of Saint-Pol threatened to arrest Cheyne if he caught him. Cheyne seems to have been able to hand over the remonstrance to Jean de Hangest at Calais in June but he himself never got further than the town gates.[51]

By the time that Hangest received the English remonstrance it had been overtaken by events. At Saint-Malo a very large privateering expedition had been fitting out since the beginning of the year. Some 150 Breton ships were concentrated in the harbour and more were being made ready in the ports of Normandy. About 2,000 men-at-arms had been recruited to embark on them in addition to their crews and some companies of crossbowmen. The captains were Jean de Penhoet and Guillaume du Châtel, the two Breton noblemen who had led the raid on Plymouth the previous August. They had the explicit approval of the royal dukes. When the French delegation failed to appear at Calais on 1 March, Henry IV and his ministers assumed the worst. It was the first time that the French had broken off diplomatic contact completely or allowed the truce of 1396 to lapse. A French landing in England was declared to be imminent. The admirals were ordered to concentrate all available ships in the Downs off the Kent coast. Men-at-arms were summoned to London from across England to board them and coast-guards were arrayed to defend the beaches.

In the second week of April 1404 the Breton and Norman fleets put to sea and joined forces in the Channel before making for the Devon coast. They met with no resistance at sea. But the ships were sighted and the coast-guards were ready for them. On 15 April the French landed at Blackpool Sands, about two miles from Dartmouth. They found that a long line of trenches had been dug along the escarpment behind the beach. A large force of armed men was gathered behind them. Guillaume du Châtel landed with the first companies of men-at-arms. His instinct was to wait for his crossbowmen and the rest of the men-at-arms, who were still disembarking from the ships, and then to try to take the defenders by the flank. But he was talked out of this cautious tactic by his companions. Instead it was decided to mount a frontal assault on the defenders from the beach. It was an act of courageous folly. The men advanced into a hail of arrows, suffering heavy losses. Those who penetrated to the trenches were killed in large numbers as they tried to fight their way across. Many of their companions were drowned as they tried to wade ashore from the ships in full armour to join the mêlée. Others were massacred by furious local levies with no conception of the value of a man-at-arms taken alive. About 500 French died including Guillaume du Châtel himself. When it was all over a large part of the French force, including Jean de

Penhoet, was still on board the ships. Seeing the fate of their companions, they turned about and made for home. Twenty knights and three lords were taken alive in addition to a large number of men of lesser rank. They included a Scottish knight, Sir James Douglas of Dalkeith, an unnamed Welsh squire and two of Guillaume du Châtel's brothers, one of whom, Tanneguy, was destined to play a notorious part in the wars of the next generation. In due course the leading prisoners were sent under escort to London to be interrogated about future French plans. Guillaume himself was pulled out from among the dead and buried in Dartmouth Church. Some time afterwards, another brother wrote to the King from Brittany asking to be allowed to visit the place where he had fallen and to take his body home. 'Men who get caught up in war', he wrote, 'may perchance be blessed by good fortune or cursed by bad, for none of us knows the inscrutable ways of the Lord.'[52]

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The Duke of Burgundy had approved the Breton expeditionary force. His retainers and servants were prominent in Guillaume du Châtel's army and some had had their expenses paid by their master. But it was to be Philip's last contribution to the war with England. In the spring of 1404 a severe epidemic of flu swept across northern Europe. Philip, who had left Paris early in March, was taken ill at Brussels on 16 April. He deteriorated fast. On 26 April he left for Arras in a litter, preceded by a team of sweepers to smooth the road as he passed. On the following day he died at an inn in the small town of Halle at the edge of the Flemish plain. Over the following six weeks the Duke's embalmed remains, clothed in the habit of a Carthusian monk and encased in a lead coffin weighing a third of a ton, were carried slowly across the rough roads of north-eastern France, escorted by his sons, courtiers and servants and sixty liveried torch-bearers. On 16 June he was buried in the magnificent Carthusian monastery of Champmol outside Dijon which he had built to serve as the mausoleum of his family, in the great marble tomb surrounded by mourners in carved stone on which teams of sculptors had been working intermittently for more than two decades.[53]

Philip of Burgundy had been born in 1342, five years after Edward III had declared war on France. His whole life had been overshadowed by the struggle with England. He had been at the forefront of France's public life since the day, nearly half a century before, when he had been captured with his father John II on the battlefield of Poitiers. Widely regarded as France's most experienced

international statesman, he had succeeded in maintaining his grip on power for more than twenty years after the death of Charles V in 1380 by dint of sheer experience, eloquence and force of personality. Only in the last few months of his life was he displaced by a younger generation. In a number of ways Philip's death marked a turning point. He had plundered the resources of the monarchy to create the germ of a great transnational state standing across France's eastern and northern borders, as much German as French. He had been too close to the French court and administration, too intimate a member of the inner circle of the French royal family to perceive any difference between his own interests and those of France. His successors were inevitably more distant and objective, and in their time the divergent destinies of France and Burgundy became more obvious. A younger generation of French royal princes, of which the 32-year-old Duke of Orléans was the figurehead, was coming to power. They had not lived through the catastrophes of the mid-fourteenth century. They lacked Philip's cautious ways, his wider grasp of European politics and his understanding of the limits of French power, and they did not share his historic respect for England.

Notes

1
Law and Custom of the Sea, i, 112–14; introduction to *Sel. Pleas Admiralty*, i, pp. xiv–liv; examples at *Cal. Inq. Misc.*, vii, no. 270; cf. nos 196, 227, 254, 276, 278. For piratical incidents before 1402, see AN J645/17 (items 12, 13, 15, 24, 25, 51). Long: *CPR 1408–13*, 316, 318; BL Add. MS 20462, fol. 148vo; PRO E403/608, m. 2 (15 May); *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 596–8. Neutrals: Ford, 65, 78. *Christopher* incident: *Hanserecesse*, v, nos 130, 440 [10]; *Cal. Inq. Misc.*, vii, no. 455; *CCR 1413–19*, 24–5. Hanse losses: T. H. Lloyd (1991), 112–13. Castilian: PRO C47/32/24a. Ford, 65, 74–7, 78 analyses these documents; cf. Pistono (1975), 323–7.

2
Rouen Arsenal: *Doc. Clos des Galées*, i, 67–73. English royal ships: Sumption, iii, 376–7; PRO E101/43/6, 7. Contract fleets: Sumption, iii, 378, 542. Arrangements of 1406: *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 332–4, 404–6 [20–6, 142], 423–4 [19]; *Foed.*, viii, 437–8, 455–6.

3
Dartmouth: *CPR 1388–92*, 338. Hawleys: *CPR 1401–5*, 114, 198, 274, 298; *CCR 1402–5,* 199; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 270–3; Ford, 66, 69–70, 72, 76; Pistono (1979), 147–8; *ODNB*, xxv, 968–9; *HoC.*, iii, 328–32; Kingsford (1925), 83–4, 85–7. Harry Pay: *CCR 1402–5*, 24, 91, 109, 203, 339; *CPR 1401–5*, 131, 357, 360–1, 364, 424, 425; *Cal. Inq. Misc.*, vii, no. 227; *Victorial*, 206; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 406–8, 464, 498. Spicers: *CCR 1399–1402*, 412, 546–7; *CCR 1402–5*, 27, 70, 76, 100; *CPR 1401–5*, 277, 283, 424; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 113; PRO SC1/43/136, 49/130; *Cal. Inq. Misc.*, vii. 254; Ford, 71–3; *HoC.*, iv, 428–9. Long: *HoC.*, iii, 620, 621.

4

Bretons: *Libelle*, ll. 159–60. St-Malo: AN J645/36 (items 25–7, 32, 34, 41); J645/36bis (items 2, 4, 5, 11, 13–15, 18, 32, 33, 46). Harfleur: *Cotton MS Galba,* 77; Basin, *Hist.*, i, 32. Gravelines: *Varenbergh, 545, 546; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 196; *Cotton MS Galba,* 78; AD Nord B534/150233, 4; *Rec. Ord. Pays-Bas*, iii, no. 5 [4]. Fretin: Huguet, 16–24; AN J645/36 (items 20–3, 37); *Cotton MS Galba,* 76–7; Le Bis, 'Dossier', nos 28 [6], 38 [9]; Monstrelet, *Chron.,* i, 71; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 54; *Chronographia*, iii, 226–7; 'Res gestae', 232; PRO SC1/43/131 (Scottish flag). Jansz: *Handelingen (1384–1405)*, nos 599, 600, 602, 606–7, 609, 627; Brandon, *Chron.*, 101; AD Nord B584/1787220 ('pirate'); Paviot, 134–5 (Portofino); *Inv. Arch. Ville Bruges*, iii, 458 (protectors).

5

Le Bis, 'Dossier', no. 29.

6

English losses: AN J645/48 (English claim rolls); Le Bis, 'Dossier', nos 34, 39 [1–5, 9]; *CPR 1401–5*, 198, 198–9, 199, 228, 238, 276, 277, 281, 283; *CPR 1405–8*, 228; *CCR 1402–5*, 45, 94; PRO SC8/44/2186; PRO E101/43/14; AD Nord B528/14994; *Cal. Inq. Misc.*, vii, no. 252; *Foed.*, viii, 284–5, 304. Coastal raids, fishermen: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 52–4; BN PO 283/du Belloy/118 (landing at La Hogue, Nov. 1402); Le Bis, 'Dossier', no. 41 [9, 14].

7

Haegeman, 209–13; Prevenier (1973), 490–1, 493–6.

8

Haegeman, 183, 185–208, 216–28.

9

Flemish losses: PRO C47/32/24 (2); PRO E30/1280–1, 1628; AD Nord B546/1509392; AN 645/28, 35; PRO E30/1281 (1403). Response: AD Nord B533/150313; *Handelingen (1384–1405)*, nos 564, 566, 578–83, 592–4, 598–9 (summary of their petition in *Rec. Ord. Pays-Bas*, ii, no. 662); *Cotton MS Galba,* 466; *Söchting, 196–7 (agreement of 7 Mar. 1403).

10

Handelingen (1384–1405), no. 601, formally confirmed on 30 June after the King's next relapse: *Rec. Ord. Pays-Bas*, ii, nos 662, 663 [12, 13], 665 (earlier draft [12 June] in *Cartellieri [1910], 154–7).

11

Handelingen (1384–1405), nos 597–8, 605, 610–11, 615–16, 617, 620, 625; *Foed.*, viii, 327–8; and memorandum of 10 Nov. 1402 ('Poins préjudiciables') in *Varenbergh, 543–6, 544–5. Obstruction: Prevenier (1961), 181–4; Nordberg, 135–6.

12

Touchard, 87–111, 117; *Libelle*, ll. 155–6.

13

'Chron. Brioc.', 80–3; Bouchart, *Gr. Chron.*, ii, 238–9; Henneman, 191–3.

14

Marriage: 'Chron. Brioc.', 83–5. Regency: 'Chron. Brioc.', 86.

15

'Lettre de Charles VI … sur la régence'; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 40; *Itin. Ph. le Hardi*, 328–9; David, 175–8; 'Chron. Brioc.', 85–9; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 40–2; *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 722. 'Absence': *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 34, 36, 46. Dower: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 34–5; *Plancher, iii, no. 210; *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 470–1.

16

Cal. Signet L., no. 48; *Anglo-Norman L.*, no. 353; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 106; Touchard, 110–11; *CCR 1402–5*, 45.

17

Ord., vii, 530–8; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 207; *Reichstagsakten*, v, no. 291; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 66–8.

18

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 76; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 601–3; *Ord.*, viii, 577–83; *Plancher, iii, nos 211–15.

19

*Dupuy, 201–4; Nordberg, 73–5.

20

Escape: Alpartil, *Chron. Actit.*, 139–40; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 70–4; Valois (1896–1902), iii, 329. Council: BN Fr. 14371, fols 141–141vo (summons, 28 Feb. 1403); *Inv. AC Toulouse*, i, 102 (prohibition same day on preaching against the withdrawal of obedience); *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 62–4, 86–102; *Vet. Script.*, vii, 677 and *Thes. Nov. Anecd.*, ii, 1273; *Ord.*, viii, 593–6.

21

Exchange with Henry: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 52–66; AN X1A 8602, fols 174vo. Plans: *Rey, ii, 623–4; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 156; *Reichstagsakten*, v, no. 295 [9].

22

Le Bis, 'Dossier', nos 39 [1–2], 40–3, 45; *Foed.*, viii, 305–10, 310–11, 315–16, 318–19.

23

Budget: *Rey, ii, 623–4 (in francs, used as a synonym for *livres*). Italy: Jarry, 293.

24

The ordinance of 30 Jan. 1404 imposing the *taille* (BN Fr. 25708/532) recorded that it had been 'discussed many times, both in our presence and elsewhere, between the Dukes of Berry, Burgundy, Orléans and Bourbon' (cf. similar statements at *Vaissète, x, 1913–17 and BL Egerton Ch., 19). The only time when the King was sane and all four princes were in Paris was the first three weeks of July 1403: see *Itin. Ph. le Hardi*, 335; Lehoux (1966–8), iii, 497; Jarry, 286–7; Troubat, ii, 818; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 102, 122. Philip's pay-off: AD Côte d'Or 1538, fol. 23vo, 35; Pocquet (1938), 139, 158; Nieuwenhuysen, i, 194–5 (Ann. IV).

25

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 104–12; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 71–2; Cochon, *Chron.*, 209; *Chronographia*, iii, 225–6; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 382–4; *Chronicles of London*, 63–4; *Eulogium*, iii, 395; *Foed.*, viii, 325–6; *Cotton MS Galba*, 77–8. On Guillaume du Châtel: Gonzalez, App. 184. Plymouth walls: *CPR 1401–5*, 346, 353.

26

Bean, 3–11; Hardyng, *Chron.*, 378; Hardyng, *Chron.*, 378 (quotation); PRO C47/22/11 (10), partly calendared in *Cal. Doc. Scot.*, iv, no. 506 (should be dated 1399) (Ed. of Langley).

27

Nevilles: Arvanigian (2003), 82, 119–20, 124–7; *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 161. Finance: *Proc. PC*, i, 204–5, ii, 57–9; Steel, 84, 86, 87, 88. Douglas: Hardyng, *Chron.*, 360.

28

Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 50–4; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 356; Hardyng, *Chron.*, 361; Wyntoun, *Orig. Chron.*, vi, 405–6; *Proc. PC*, i, 203–4.

29
Contact with Welsh: *CPR 1401–5*, 216, 391; *Cal. Doc. Scot.*, iv, no. 646. Welsh offensive: *Proc. PC*, i, 206–7, ii, 61–3; *Orig. Letters*, Ser. II, i 14–20, 22–3; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 138–48; *Cal. Signet L.*, no. 930.
30
'Northern Chron.', 281; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 54–6; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 358–62; 'Chron. Dieulacres', 177–8; Hardyng, *Chron.*, 351, 361–2; *Cal. Signet L.*, no. 930; *Proc. PC*, i, 207–9. Lieutenancy: *Foed.*, viii, 291–2. Strengths, recruits: P. Morgan (1987), 212–18. Edmund Mortimer: *Orig. Letters*, Ser. II, i, 24–5.
31
'Chron. Dieulacres', 178–81; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 362–78, 804–6; Usk, *Chron.*, 168–70; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 56–8; *Kingsford (1913), 281; *Eulogium*, iii, 396–8; *Chronicles of London*, 63; Wyntoun, *Orig. Chron.*, vi, 406–9; Waurin, *Rec. cron.*, ii, 62. Henry's summons: *Foed.*, viii, 313–14; *CPR 1401–5*, 294.
32
Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 54–6; A. King, 145–6, 147–9; *Proc. PC*, i, 209–10; *Kingsford (1913), 281; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 376–8; *Foed.*, viii, 319.
33
Proc. PC, i, 210–16, ii, 54–6; *Kingsford (1913), 282; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 376–80; *Foed.*, viii, 319; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 231 [11]; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 206–7; *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 165; *CCR 1402–5*, 206; A. King, 145–6, 147–9.
34
Brut, ii, 548 (Stanley); *Chrons. London,* 63; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 380; *Foed.*, viii, 320, 323–4, 333; *CPR 1401–5*, 330; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 231–2 [11–14]; 'Some Durham Documents', 199.
35
AN X1A 8602, fols 174vo–175vo (letter); Baye, *Journ.*, i, 75n; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 227–8 [3], 279.
36
Louis: Jarry, 295–7, 299–301 (*Foed.*, viii, 336, reporting the departure of Orléans for Gascony, belongs to 1406). Plans: *Cal. Signet L.*, nos 163; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 167–70; Le Bis, 'Dossier', no. 49; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* iii, 156–8; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 156, 161. Diplomacy: Le Bis, 'Dossier', nos 49–51; *Cotton MS Galba*, 63–81; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 175–6, 200–1; BL Add. Ch. 1397; *Handelingen (1384–14055)*, nos 648–9, 651, 654. In March 1404, an Anglo-Flemish conference was proposed for April, but it was abandoned on the Duke's death: *Cotton MS Galba, 71; Handelingen (1384–1405)*, nos 660, 663, 665; AD Nord B533/15016, 150163, 23583, 23876.
37
J. d'Espagne: *Roy. Lett.*, i, 160–2. Numbers: ibid., ii, 15–17. Henry knew of their presence by mid-September: *Anglo-Norman L.*, no. 284 (misdated). On Jean: PRO E403/579, m. 6; *Proc. PC*, i, 221. Breton squires of that name served in Olivier de Clisson's retinue in the late 1370s and with the Dauphin in 1418: *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, cols. 101, 102, 104, 963.
38
Henry IV: *CPR 1401–5,* 267, 293, 295, 298; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 380. Castles: *Proc. PC*, i, 217–20; PRO E101/43/13, 24, 35, E364/34, m. 4d (Bold); *Orig. Letters,* Ser. II, i, 31–2. French at Caernarvon: PRO E101/43/24; *Orig. Letters*, Ser. II, i, 35–7.
39
Foed., viii, 325–6; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 386; Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii,

259–60; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 112–14; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 157; AN X1a 63, fol. 47–47vo (La Rochelle). Castilian ships: *CCR 1402–5,* 203, 257; *CPR 1401–5*, 360–1, 363, 425–6, 427–8; *Cal. Inq. Misc.*, vii, no. 270; Pistono (1979), 145–7, 154–6.

40

Reichstagsakten, v, no. 295 [9]; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 162.

41

Cotton MS Galba, 65, 78; Le Bis, 'Dossier', no. 49; *Inv. Ypres*, iii, no. 733; *CPR 1401–5,* 327; *Handelingen (1384–1405)*, nos 603, 605–7; AN J645/53; *CCR 1402–5,* 222; *Chronographia*, iii, 230–2. On St-Pol: Sumption, iii, 366–7.

42

Chronographia, iii, 431–3; *Extr. Reg. Tournai*, i, 55. Ambassadors: Le Bis, 'Dossier', no. 49.

43

Defence: *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 237–9 [24–5]; PRO 403/578, m. 1; *CPR 1401–5*, 318, 328–9. Berkeley: *Cat. Mun. Berkeley Castle*, i, 564; PRO E28/12 (28 Dec.); *Proc. PC*, i, 81–2.

44

Gascony: *CCR 1401–5*, 199, 222; *CPR 1401–5,* 325; *Cal. Signet L.*, nos 163; *Proc. PC*, ii, 81; *Foed.*, viii, 348; *Eulogium*, iii, 398–9; BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fol. 37. Solent: Cochon, *Chron.*, 206–7; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 91–2; *Chronographia*, iii, 232–3; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 118–20 (wrongly referring to I. of Thanet); *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 390; *Foed.*, viii, 342–4; *Cal. Signet L.*, no. 931. Wine fleet: *CCR 1402–5*, 185–6, 186; PRO E101/43/15 (the fleet had not left by late Dec. 1403: *Proc. PC*, ii, 81–3).

45

Intelligence: PRO E28/12 (28 Dec. 1403). Spy: PRO E403/578, m. 11. Ricardians: *Select Cases*, vii, 151–5; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 414.

46

Great council: *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 234 [17]. Privy council: PRO E28/12 (28 Dec. 1403).

47

St-Pol: *Chronographia*, iii, 232–3; Cochon, *Chron.*, 206–7; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 187; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 120. Calais raid: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 120, 156–8. Berkeley: PRO E101/43/30, E28/12 (28 Dec. 1403); *CCR 1402–5*, 268; Smyth, ii, 10; *CCR 1402–5,* 415; *Proc. PC*, i, 274.

48

Roy. Lett., ii, 15–17 (misdated); *Orig. Letters*, Ser. II, i, 33–4, 35, 37–8; *Proc. PC*, i, 221, ii, 77–8, 83–4; PRO E403/579, m. 6 (17 June). Young and Hanmer: *Foed.*, viii, 356.

49

Christmas: *Itin. Ph. le Hardi*, 336–7; Lehoux (1966–8), iii, 499; Troubat, ii, 818–19; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 122 ('absence'). *Council: Cotton MS Galba*, 68; 'Lettres closes Tournai', nos 20–1; BN Fr. 25708/532; BN PO 24/Albret/22; Rey, i, 392; *Chronographia*, iii, 237; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 138–40. Embassies: *Roy. Lett.*, i, 205.

50

Parl. Rolls, viii, 227–8, 229–31, 234, 242–3 [3, 10, 17, 33], *279; *CFR 1399–1405*, 251–64; *Sel. Docs. English Const. Hist.*, 213–14; *Proc. PC*, i, 266–70 (yield); *Eulogium*, iii, 399–400. Household costs: Given-Wilson (1986), 83, 90–2, 93–4, 108.

51

Foed., viii, 348–50 (25 Feb.) (earlier draft of 14 Feb. in 'Parl. docs.', 161–2). Cheyne: PRO E28/14/904; BL Add. Ch. 12504; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 225–6; *Foed.*, 350–1; *Cotton MS Galba*, 124–5.

52

Chronographia, iii, 233–5; Cochon, *Chron.*, 207–8; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 170–8; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 80–1; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 398–406; *Chrons. London*, 64; *Roy. Lett.*, I, 270–2; *CCR 1402–5*, 268, 330, 362; *CPR 1401–5*, 429, 430; *Foed.*, viii, 358; *M. Jones (2006), 105–6, 121–2.

53

Expenses: AD Côte d'Or B1538, fol. 136. Philip's death: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 142–4; *Cartellieri (1910), 159; *Itin. Ph. le Hardi*, 337; David, 178–82.

CHAPTER IV

The Duke of Orléans, 1404–1405

For three years after the death of Philip of Burgundy the march of Gascony was the main theatre of the war. The English duchy of Guyenne had been the chief bone of contention at successive diplomatic conferences since the beginning of the fourteenth century. But on the ground realities had changed. During the reign of Edward I a century before, the duchy had been a valuable asset, a source of revenue and manpower and a badge of status within a French nobility to which the kings of England still conceived themselves to belong. Since the French conquests of the 1370s it had been none of these things. Now reduced to a modest portion of the old province of Gascony, the duchy had become a drain on the financial and military resources of the English Crown. It was conserved as a personal heritage of the kings of England whose defence was a debt of honour owed to their dynasty, part of the piety of a medieval nobleman.

At the time of Henry IV's accession in 1399 English rule was confined to two vulnerable blocks of territory. There was the city of Bordeaux and its hinterland, comprising the Médoc north of the city, the area east and south of it, and a narrow strip of territory along the right bank of the Gironde and the lower Dordogne including the towns of Blaye, Bourg, Libourne and Saint-Émilion and the fortress of Fronsac. These places served as the outer defences of the Bordelais against attack from the north. A second block of territory comprised the city of Bayonne together with the territory known as the terre de Labourd lying south of it and the provinces of the Adour valley to the east, including the important towns of Saint-Sever and Dax. A narrow ribbon of bleak, windswept coastal land running through the Landes connected the two regions. Such evidence as there is suggests that the duchy's population may have been about 150,000. Most of them lived in the principal towns. Bordeaux, politically and economically the dominant city, may have had about 30,000 inhabitants.[1]

4 The march of Gascony, 1400–1407

In addition to the territory which was directly administered from Bordeaux there were several dozen remote castles scattered across south-western France which were garrisoned by companies of *routiers*, generally Gascon or Béarnais. These captains acknowledged the King of England as their sovereign, but they did not depend on him for their wages and were only loosely controlled by his officials. They financed themselves from *patis*, essentially protection money collected under agreements imposed by force on the surrounding country. Some of these castles were enclaves of the duchy which had been left stranded behind the lines by the incoming tide of French conquest in the last three decades of the fourteenth century. They included the Pyrenean fortresses of Mauléon and Lourdes, both of them surrounded by territory controlled by the viscounts of Béarn; and the powerful garrisoned castle of Mussidan in the valley of the Isle in Périgord, which belonged to the Montauts, one of the great landed families of the Bordelais. However, most of the remote castles beyond the march had been seized by Gascon companies from their French owners during the last great period of *routier* activity in the 1380s.

There were three main groups of fortresses. An important group in Saintonge was controlled by companies operating under the authority of the Captals de Buch, another powerful Bordelais dynasty. These places, Chalais in the valley of the Dronne north of Libourne and the immense thirteenth-century fortress of Bouteville near Jarnac in the valley of the Charente, together with their smaller satellite forts, had for years been treated as part of the duchy's forward line of defence to the north. Another group was located in the valley of the Dordogne in southern Périgord. Most of these were surviving fragments of the *routier* empire of Bertucat, Bastard of Albret, one of the most successful brigands of the late fourteenth century, who had died in 1383. At the beginning of the fifteenth century their operations were still coordinated by his companion in arms and designated heir Ramonet de Sort. Finally there was a group of about a dozen castles in northern Périgord and Limousin belonging to a loose federation of companies controlled by the captain of Courbefy, a large twelfth-century fortress south of Limoges at one of the highest points of the Plateau Limousin.

The legal status of these places was anomalous. When in June 1389 the truce of Leulinghem suspended hostilities between England and France, the Anglo-Gascon garrisons beyond the march were very favourably treated. They were required to refrain from fresh conquests but they did not have to vacate their strongholds and were allowed to continue levying *patis* indefinitely under existing agreements. In 1396 the treaty of Paris extended these arrangements for the duration of the twenty-eight-year truce, subject only to a rather vague undertaking, largely ignored in practice, that the more excessive *patis* would be 'moderated' to reasonable levels. The continued presence of the garrisons was a constant source of tension. They were extremely costly to the communities within reach of them. In Paris it was reckoned that Courbefy alone was taking 36,000 *livres* a year in *patis*. From time to time they also tied down substantial French forces. But they had a political importance for the English far outweighing their real strategic value. They symbolised the English kings' continuing claims to the vast territories acquired by the treaty of Brétigny in 1360 and then lost in the 1370s, claims which would otherwise have been no more than legal abstractions, cheap bargaining chips to be traded away at diplomatic conferences.[2]

The shrunken, thinly populated duchy to which Henry IV succeeded in 1399 had few natural defences and was surrounded on all sides by enemies. The foremost of these enemies was the Duke of Orléans. To the north and east the English duchy was bounded by the counties of Périgord and Angoulême, which belonged to him, and by the province of Saintonge whose seneschal was his chamberlain and collaborator John Harpeden. Louis of Orléans had long-standing ambitions in the south-west. He was the first French political leader since Louis I of Anjou a generation earlier to appreciate the significance of Guyenne to the English kings. Its loss would have been irreversible and probably decisive in the wider conflict between the two countries. But the Duke's views were not wholly disinterested. He expected to be the principal beneficiary of a French conquest. In addition to husbanding his own interests in the south-west, he had forged personal alliances with most of the other territorial magnates of the march, who could also expect to gain by the expulsion of the English.

Along the eastern march of the duchy the lands of the lords of Albret extended from the Garonne to the Adour. The Albrets had been the foremost barons of English Guyenne until the 1340s and again in the 1360s before finally throwing in their lot with the French Crown. Their wealth, combined with a pervasive network of kinsmen and clients, made them a formidable force in the region.

Charles, the current lord of Albret, was also an influential voice in Paris: a pensioner of Charles VI, an ally of the Duke of Orléans and from 1403 Constable of France. Immediately east of the *pays d'Albret* the vast domains of the counts of Armagnac extended in a broken arc from the march of Béarn to Rouergue. The current head of the family, Bernard VII Count of Armagnac, was the richest and most powerful territorial magnate of the south-west, whose domains could furnish thousands of soldiers as well as the funds to maintain them. Like Charles d'Albret, Bernard had also learned to cultivate his influence in Paris. He was the first count of his line to maintain a permanent residence there, in the aristocratic quarter by the Louvre. Like Charles d'Albret, too, he was a firm ally of the Duke of Orléans from whom he received in 1403 a life pension of 6,000 *livres* a year, one of the most expensive of all Louis' retainers. The presence of these powerful and hostile magnates on the marches of the English duchy represented a threat to its survival which was far more than a matter of armed force. They used their influence and patronage to undermine loyalty to the English kings. The ragged process by which territory had been reconquered by the French since 1369 assisted this process. It had left innumerable bonds of loyalty, interest or dependence between the communities on either side of the porous frontier. There were few families in English Gascony whose interests were confined to the duchy or whose allegiance was wholly unambiguous.[3]

The duchy's economy was based mainly on its production of wine, on the ship-owning community of Bayonne and on the role of Bordeaux as an entrepôt for the produce of the five great river basins of southern France which passed through the Gironde to the sea. It was therefore vulnerable to war and political upheaval, which could sever its links to the *haut pays* of Languedoc and Périgord and make the sea lanes to its principal export markets in England and the Low Countries precarious. The campaigns of the Duke of Anjou in the 1370s had been a watershed in the duchy's history. They brought the limits of French administration to within thirty miles of Bordeaux and greatly increased the duchy's economic dependence on England. England was the natural market for the wines of Bordeaux at a time when wine could not be carried over long distances except by water. The tight, self-perpetuating commercial oligarchy of Bordeaux, from which the city's governing class was drawn, had close financial relations with the English aristocracy and with the mercantile community of London. Cut off now from the great granaries of Poitou and Saintonge and possessing little arable land of its own, Gascony was increasingly dependent on England for grain to feed its urban populations. In

1403, when the French were blockading Bordeaux by land and sea, the city government declared in a petition addressed to Henry IV that 'this land so far from him and so lacking in grain cannot sustain itself for three months without his aid'.[4]

The seat of the duchy's administration was the former citadel of Bordeaux, the Château de l'Ombrière. This large rambling fortress, parts of which dated back to Roman times, was by now entirely enclosed by the city and devoid of any defensive function. It housed the Seneschal of Guyenne, who was the chief administrative, judicial and military authority of the duchy, and the Constable of Bordeaux, who served as its principal financial officer. They were supported by a small group of clerks and military retainers. In addition the Mayor of Bordeaux, a royal appointment, played an increasingly important part in the government of the duchy. All three officers were generally English knights although exceptionally the office of Seneschal was held throughout the reign of Henry IV by a Gascon, Gaillard de Durfort lord of Duras. He had been present at Henry IV's coronation and belonged to one of the most consistently loyal noble families of Guyenne.[5] Recently the practice had also grown up of appointing an English knight as Seneschal of the Landes, whose main function was the defence of the southern marches of the duchy.

The Seneschal of Guyenne governed through a council comprising the tiny group of English officials, a corps of Gascon jurists and a number of prominent Gascon noblemen. But this was government thinly spread and lacking the most basic resources for its task. During the reign of Henry IV the revenues at the disposal of the ducal government amounted on average to little more than £1,200 sterling a year, or two and a half times the Seneschal's salary. Nearly nine-tenths of this came from customs duties levied on wine exports and on goods passing Libourne and Bordeaux from the *haut pays*, a highly unstable income stream which was sensitive to economic fluctuations and the state of relations with France. The rest came from miscellaneous fees and dues collected in Bordeaux and from coinage profits. The paltry revenues reaching the Constable's coffers barely covered the cost of ordinary peacetime administration. Less than 4 per cent of it went on war. Most of the ordinary revenues of the duchy were either uncollectable or had been granted out to prominent Gascon noblemen to assure their loyalty. In November 1402 there was an ugly brawl during a meeting of the ducal council in the Dominican chapel in Bordeaux. Swords were drawn after the Constable of Bordeaux, Sir William Farringdon, explained that there was no money to pay any retaining fees which were not secured. The lord of Montferrand, who was

among the largest creditors, accused him of having embezzled it. Farringdon was arrested and suspended from his functions although he was almost certainly innocent and was ultimately exonerated. The penury of the duchy's government meant that no sustained military effort was possible without financial support from England. The days of direct subsidies from the English Exchequer were long gone. But the King's English revenues were used to pay the advances of English officials and soldiers going out to Gascony and sometimes to clear their arrears and debts when they returned. In the first four years of Henry IV's reign payments of this kind amounted on average to about £1,200 a year (roughly the same as the duchy's entire local revenues).[6]

These were trivial sums which bought very little in the way of military service. In 1401 the council in Bordeaux reported to the King that the defence of the duchy required a permanent force of at least 1,200 men-at-arms in addition to archers and crossbowmen. In fact the Seneschal and his sub-seneschals retained a permanent force of about 140 men-at-arms between them, most of them Gascons, and about 260 archers, mostly English. It was little more than a tenth of what was required. In addition the Seneschal could call on the retinues of a small group of professional Gascon *routiers* and about ten noble families with their own military retinues. The fragmentary surviving records of the duchy suggest that at the beginning of the fifteenth century these sources accounted for about 500 mounted men-at-arms. In addition there was a corps of artillerymen at the Château de l'Ombrière and contingents of infantry and crossbowmen were contributed by the towns. These strengths were of course significantly increased when the King sent out a lieutenant or a military expedition from England to confront some crisis of the duchy's affairs. But the despatch of large bodies of troops from England was an expensive and logistically difficult option. As always the problem both in England and Gascony was money. In November 1401 Gaillard de Durfort was reported to be 'very troubled and aggrieved' by the want of funds to pay even the small forces at his disposal. The cost of defending the great fortress of Fronsac north of Libourne was alone reckoned at more than £1,600 a year, which exceeded the entire revenues of the duchy. The wages of its garrison were constantly in arrears. Gaillard de Durfort was obliged to borrow from the municipality of Bordeaux to pay his own salary.[7]

These conditions severely tested the loyalty of the Gascons. There had been a large number of important defections in the 1370s by noblemen who found that those of their domains that had been overrun by the armies of the Duke of Anjou were worth more than

what they held in the shrunken remnant of English Guyenne. By 1400, however, most of the Gascon nobility who still supported the English Crown did so out of loyalty. They could have secured their position more effectively by selling themselves to the French. Yet they did not. Their attitude was based mainly on sentiment and tradition. By comparison the loyalty of the towns was a loyalty of calculation and often sensitive to the jostling of factions within the urban oligarchies. But for the moment the calculation generally favoured the link with England. Bordeaux and Bayonne were linked to England by powerful ties of economic interest. Even the smaller towns knew that they were in a better position to bargain for advantage with the weak and distant government of the King of England than with the bureaucratic Moloch of France. Taxation and defence were the critical factors. Taxation was significantly higher in the towns of neighbouring Languedoc. And, while England may have done little for their defence, the only alternative was to become French border posts, exposed to the daily attacks of Gascon garrisons and free companies.

The 1390s had been a troubled time for the duchy of Guyenne. Richard II's grant of the duchy for life to his uncle John of Gaunt had infringed the understanding, in some cases reinforced by royal charters, that the King would not separate the duchy from the Crown. This was a real grievance, aggravated by the high-handed behaviour of Gaunt's representatives in the duchy. Feelings were especially strong in Bordeaux which had traditionally profited by its close links to the court in England. These events had left a legacy of resentment and suspicion which made many Gascons wary of the accession of Gaunt's son to the English throne. In the final pages of his chronicle Froissart records that the deposition of Richard II provoked 'lamentations' and threats of rebellion in the major towns of Gascony. The internal history of the duchy in these years is particularly obscure but there is evidence of unrest in Bayonne, Libourne and Dax over the winter of 1399–1400 and an attempted coup in Bordeaux involving Raimond de Montaut lord of Mussidan, traditionally one of the strongest supporters of the English connection among the Gascon nobility.[8] These disturbances are unlikely to have been inspired by affection for Richard II, let alone hostility to English rule. The main factor at work was the fear that the duchy of Guyenne might not survive a change of dynasty in England. This was a prospect which undid every political calculation. Political instability in England, the French government's cold war against Henry IV and the new King's penury and preoccupation with domestic affairs must have accentuated the insecurity of even the most loyal Gascons.

Charles VI's ministers made a determined attempt to exploit these divisions during the winter of 1399–1400. In about December 1399 Charles d'Albret was sent to undermine the loyalty of Henry's Gascon subjects together with the Count of Armagnac and other influential figures in the region. They were instructed to impress on prominent noblemen the iniquity of what had happened at Westminster and to invite them to appeal to the Parlement and place themselves under the protection of the French Crown. It was a deliberate attempt to repeat the tactic which had been so successful in detaching the subjects of the Black Prince at the end of the 1360s. Albret presumably complied with his instructions but he seems to have met with little success. The Duke of Bourbon came to the French border town of Agen where he received the delegates of Bordeaux, Bayonne and Dax, the three principal cities of the duchy. He made them extravagant promises of privileged status. According to Froissart these approaches were firmly rejected by the oligarchies of all three cities, mainly because of their fear about the level of taxation in France. 'If the French ruled over us,' they are reported to have said,

> they would apply the same practices to us. Better to stick with the English dynasty under which we were born and which will respect our liberties. If London has deposed King Richard and crowned King Henry what is that to us? … We have more trade with the English in wine, wool and cloth than with the French and in the nature of things we are inclined their way.

The speech was fictional but it was close to the truth, like so many of Froissart's imagined discourses.[9]

The one serious defection from the Anglo-Gascon cause was not, however, Albret's doing or Bourbon's but arose from the chances of extinction and succession among the great families of the south-west. The Captals de Buch were among the leading territorial magnates of the lower Garonne valley. They had been pillars of the English duchy for generations. The previous Captal, Jean de Grailly, had been the most famous of the Gascon companions of the Black Prince, the hero of Poitiers and Nájera, who had died in a French prison in 1376 rather than submit to the King of France. His uncle Archambaud de Grailly, who had inherited his title and domains, was reported in Paris to be a loyal supporter of Henry IV. However, in 1398 the male line of the counts of Foix had died out. The Pyrenean empire which had been patiently assembled by successive counts of Foix during the fourteenth century fell to Isabelle de Foix, the last count's sister, who happened to be Archambaud de Grailly's wife. The possessions of the house of Foix comprised the counties of Foix and Bigorre, which were fiefs of France, the viscounty of Béarn, whose status was uncertain, and a group of important

lordships in eastern Gascony which had once been part of the English duchy but were now entirely enclosed by the territories of the French Crown and its allies.

The prospect of the staunchly Anglophile house of Grailly taking over the whole inheritance of the counts of Foix was extremely unwelcome to Charles VI's ministers. They challenged Isabelle's claims, putting forward a rival claim of their own. Troops were sent to occupy the county of Foix. For their part Isabelle and Archambaud appealed to the Parlement of Paris and fought back against the encroachments of French troops with the support of Richard II's officials in Bordeaux and a large number of Gascon *routiers*. Initially they met with some success. But in early 1399 the old Constable, Louis de Sancerre, mounted a powerful invasion of Foix, overrunning much of the southern part of the county. Archambaud sued for terms. In May 1399 he entered into a treaty with Sancerre in the Pyrenean town of Tarbes. Under the terms of the treaty he was required to submit to Charles VI and do homage to him for all of his lands including those which he held as fiefs of the King of England in eastern Gascony. The sole exception was Béarn which he claimed, like its previous viscounts, to hold of no one but God. In March 1401 Archambaud finally did homage to the French King and was recognised as Count of Foix amid noisy festivities in Paris. Shortly afterwards he entered into a political alliance with the Duke of Orléans. His defection was the price which the French government exacted for allowing him to take possession of his wife's inheritance. But Archambaud made it clear to the council in Bordeaux that he was also troubled about Henry IV's inability to defend the duchy. The kings of England, he pointed out, had done nothing to help him in his time of trials.[10]

Henry's officials avoided retaliating against Archambaud's possessions in the Bordelais in the hope of reaching an accommodation with him. But there was no disguising the scale of the setback. The principality of Foix–Béarn was a significant regional power on the duchy's southern march which had previously been broadly neutral in the conflict of England and France, but now had to be regarded as potentially hostile. Archambaud possessed important fortresses around Bordeaux and on the marches of Saintonge. When doing homage to Charles VI he had avoided committing his strongholds in the Bordelais to the French King's cause. But he promised to deliver up his castles in Saintonge, including Bouteville and Chalais. Archambaud's two elder sons were reported to have been detained as hostages in Paris until he had done it.

In the event the fate of these places was largely determined by

the region's feudal geography. The garrison of Chalais refused to follow Archambaud into the French camp. Its professional captain, Peyroat du Puch, came from a family with a strong loyalist tradition and lands in the heart of the Bordelais which would have been vulnerable to confiscation. The castle was surrounded by French territory from which he extracted lucrative *patis* that he would have had to abandon if he had accepted allegiance to the King of France. So when Archambaud arrived to take possession in Charles's name he found the gates locked and the drawbridge raised against him. Henry IV's officers in Bordeaux eventually secured the captain's loyalty by granting him the castle and its *patis* for life. At Bouteville, however, the captain was a Pommiers whose family loyalties were more equivocal and whose lands were concentrated in the disputed march region of the eastern Agenais. He allowed himself to be bought out within a month of Archambaud's homage in Paris.

Far more serious, however, than the loss of a remote border fortress was the way that Archambaud's defection led people to question the duchy's prospect of survival. When the news of the fall of Bouteville reached Bordeaux the city council ordered an oath of loyalty to be sworn by every citizen. An English clerk reported that the whole nobility and clergy were afraid for its future. Many of them, including the Seneschal himself, were beholden to the Captal de Buch or afraid of his power and unwilling to take any action against his interests. The common opinion, he reported, was that, if the French invaded, the pervasive networks of kinsmen, allies, and clients of Foix, Albret and Armagnac would all declare for them. The English-held towns on the east shore of the Gironde would fall, the castles and towns of the Captal in the Bordelais would open their gates and the whole duchy would be overrun apart from Bordeaux itself. 'Never in our time has it been in such danger as now that the Count of Foix has sided with the lord of Albret and the Count of Armagnac.'[11]

Reports of disaffection in the duchy began to reach Westminster within weeks of the King's coronation. They provoked serious alarm. A new team was sent to Bordeaux as soon as the winter gales had passed. Gaillard de Durfort left England in April 1400 to take up his appointment as Seneschal, accompanied by Nompar de Caumont, the newly appointed Seneschal of Agenais, and an English nobleman, Hugh Despenser. They were followed by Henry Bowet Bishop of Bath, an astute ecclesiastical politician who was appointed Constable of Bordeaux, and John Trailly, John of Gaunt's experienced Mayor of Bordeaux, who was now reappointed to his old office. These officers were instructed to take formal possession of the duchy in Henry's name and to see to the security of Bordeaux

and the Bordelais. But none of them possessed the natural authority to rally support for the English King and none came with either the money or the troops to reassure the Gascons of the permanence of English rule. The Archbishop of Bordeaux, the shrewd old Italian canonist Francesco Ugoccione, advised the King in the summer of 1401 that his main task should be to reassure the Gascons that the English duchy would survive. For that, he needed a more august emissary. The Archbishop suggested Henry's cousin Edward Earl of Rutland. 'Given that your sons are still too young for such a distant mission, he is the man closest to your blood and your affections.' Ugoccione thought that the Gascons were of two opinions. There were those who thought that Henry's reputation as a warrior was enough to avert a war and therefore took no precautions; and there were those who, seeing that Henry was doing nothing, thought that all precautions were useless as without help from England they would all be overwhelmed anyway. For his part the Archbishop had no doubt that the French would sooner or later invade and that something would have to be done to bolster the defence of Gascony. After the Dauphin's nomination as Duke of Guyenne and the Count of Foix's submission to Charles VI, Henry and his English ministers were inclined to agree.[12]

The Earl of Rutland arrived in Bordeaux in October 1401, armed with viceregal powers for a period of three years and accompanied by a retinue of 300 men-at-arms and 1,000 archers. His appearance in the duchy was viewed in France as an act of aggression. The fact that he was accompanied by the dispossessed Count of Périgord no doubt added to their concerns. In fact they had no reason to worry. The Count remained harmlessly in Bordeaux where he sank into ever greater indigence and distress. Rutland's instructions were essentially pacific. He was to see to the enforcement of the truce, to rein in the Gascon companies beyond the march and to moderate the more excessive *patis* being collected by them. He was to put the defences of the duchy in order. And he was to install what amounted to a new administration in Bordeaux. Rutland brought with him from England a new Seneschal of the Landes, the redoubtable veteran Sir Matthew Gournay, now nearly eighty years old, who had held the same office in the 1380s and must have been the only man still living to have fought at Sluys, Crécy and Poitiers; Sir Richard Craddock, another exceptionally experienced knight who had been largely responsible for imposing Richard II's will on the Gascon companies in the 1390s; a new Constable of Bordeaux, William Farringdon, one of first holders of the office to be a military man as opposed to a clerk; a new Mayor of Bordeaux, the Norfolk knight Edmund Thorpe; and a new English captain for the castle of

Courbefy in Limousin, then the largest Anglo-Gascon company beyond the march. The English government agreed to pay Rutland a fixed sum for the cost of his substantial army at the rate of 25,000 marks (£16,666) a year, an enormous commitment not far short of the cost of defending Calais. Meanwhile serious consideration was given at Westminster to dismissing Gaillard de Durfort. Henry's councillors were beginning to feel that it had been a mistake to appoint a Gascon nobleman who would inevitably be caught in the web of cross-border loyalties and alliances that now seemed such a source of weakness.[13]

In the event the worst fears of the King's servants at Westminster and Bordeaux did not materialise. The French invasion did not come in 1401. The Gascon march remained relatively quiet for the first four years of Henry's reign. Complacency set in. Rutland returned to England in the spring of 1403 only eighteen months into his three-year mission. His presence was apparently no longer required or at least no longer worth its punishing cost. A significant opportunity had been lost. With the French blockade at the end of 1403 and the collapse of the truce in the following spring there was a renewed bout of panic in Bordeaux. There were reports of plots against the English dominion. The municipality sent an embassy to England to ask for the urgent despatch of a suitable captain for the English troops serving in Gascony. They also wanted money to recruit troops among the Gascons and also for bulk shipments of grain. These demands came at a difficult moment for the English government, politically and financially. Sir Hugh Luttrell was eventually appointed as Mayor of Bordeaux and sent out in the summer to command the English troops. Luttrell was an able man from a famous family of Somerset knights who had previously served as lieutenant-governor of Calais. But he was not a royal prince, as Rutland was, and he does not seem to have brought with him either reinforcements or funds. In the event he too returned prematurely to England after only three months in the post.[14] The English duchy of Guyenne was saved not by its own efforts but by the internal divisions and financial mismanagement of the French.

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When the French royal council imposed the *taille* of 1404 the four royal princes agreed that the proceeds would be reserved for war purposes and kept in a locked chest in the treasury tower of the Palace on the Île de la Cité. Nothing was to be paid out without their unanimous consent. This understanding broke down after the death of Philip of Burgundy. At some stage, probably in the early summer, the Duke of Orléans came to the tower at dead of night

with a posse of armed men and took most of the money away. Much of it was believed to have been spent on the construction of his splendid residences at Pierrefonds and La Ferté-Milon. A well-informed source reported that barely a third of the yield of the tax was spent on the needs of the kingdom. The diversion of a large part of the state's tax revenue to other purposes limited the military options open to the French King's council. But the Duke of Orléans misused even the chances that he had. The grandiose ambitions of the previous year were abandoned in a welter of confusion, constant changes of plan and unrealistic costing.

The projected siege of Calais was the first casualty. There is no trace of it in the records after March 1404. The probability is that it was abandoned soon after the death of Philip of Burgundy, who had been expected to take command and to supply most of the troops. The campaign in the south-west had originally been planned as a single thrust towards Bordeaux. Louis of Orléans had been appointed as lieutenant in Languedoc and captain-general in Guyenne in March with a view to his taking command himself. But Louis' own role in the projected offensive was as uncertain as every other aspect of the chaotic planning. By April he had changed his mind and decided to command the expedition to Wales instead.[15] By June he had changed his mind again and in the end he took no part in any of the military operations of 1404. The reasons must be a matter of speculation but the probability is that the plans had by then been scaled down to a point at which the command was beneath his dignity.

In the midst of the confusion, in June 1404 Owen Glendower's emissaries, Griffin Young and John Hanmer, arrived in Paris to negotiate an alliance with France. They had left Wales at a high point of Glendower's fortunes. Harlech and Aberystwyth had been captured, the first major fortresses to be garrisoned by the rebels against the English. Cardiff, a walled town which was already one of the most important places of south Wales, was captured during the summer after a siege of several months and its castle demolished. Glendower now controlled most of west Wales and Glamorgan as well as large parts of the north. He had begun to assume the trappings of regality, with a great and a privy seal, a chancellor and ambassadors. There is some evidence that in the summer of 1404 he presided over a parliament of the regions under his control at Machynlleth in Powys. By good fortune Young and Hanmer arrived in the French capital at a time when Charles VI was in remission. They were received with open arms. Two of Charles's councillors were given a power of attorney to deal with them which enabled the discussions to continue when, not long afterwards, the

King relapsed once more into incoherence. The document, which was finally sealed in the Chancellor's Parisian mansion on 14 July, declared that Glendower and the King of France were henceforth 'indissolubly joined in friendship and alliance against Henry of Lancaster and his supporters and accomplices'.[16]

A close ally of Louis of Orléans, Jacques de Bourbon Count of La Marche, was appointed to lead a seaborne expedition to Wales. La Marche was a distant cousin of the dukes of Bourbon. He was a much-admired knight who had fought with distinction in the Nicopolis crusade of 1396. But he was a poor businessman. He entered into a fixed-price contract with Charles VI's government to raise an army of 800 men-at-arms and 300 crossbowmen to serve for three months including the time required for the sea passage. For this he was paid a lump sum of 100,000 *écus* to cover all the wages and other expenses of the expedition. The army was expected to embark in two groups at Brest and Harfleur on 15 August. The French had not forgotten the disastrous expedition to Scotland in 1385 when their troops had last landed in a remote and barren part of the British Isles only to find that the impoverished local communities were unable to support them with basic supplies. La Marche and his companions had detailed discussions with the Welsh ambassadors about the logistical challenges: landing places, overland routes, sources of provisions. The French also agreed to address the Welsh rebels' chronic shortage of weapons. Bulk purchases of arms were made from the armourers of Paris and loaded onto barges in the Seine to accompany the ambassadors back to Wales. Charles VI himself contributed a gilded helmet, sword and cuirass, a personal gift for Glendower from his own armoury.[17]

The main difficulties about the proposed expedition to Wales were logistical. A fleet would have to be found for the long voyage round the Lizard. This would require a considerable number of transports. English experience suggests that on a long voyage like this even the larger ships could be expected to carry no more than ten to fifteen men with their horses and equipment. This implied a fleet of at least 120 transports to carry the army which La Marche had contracted to recruit. The French were short of large ships. They were counting on their Castilian allies to supply them. They also needed an escort force of galleys or armed barges to protect the transports as they passed the great English privateering centres of Dartmouth, Plymouth, Fowey and Bristol. It had originally been hoped to obtain these too from Castile. Henry III of Castile had received the French ambassador Charles de Savoisy earlier in the year with much pomp and covered him with gifts. But unfortunately for Savoisy, his appearance in Castile coincided with a Castilian

mission to England which was trying to negotiate an extension of the current maritime truce between the two countries. The Castilian King seems to have been unwilling to commit himself without knowing the outcome of these discussions. In the event the Anglo-Castilian truce was only extended to midsummer. So the Castilian government sent an embassy post-haste to Paris with a promise of forty fully armed and equipped carracks. By then, however, it was July. Much of the season was already lost. The Duke of Bourbon pressed the Castilians to send the ships by the projected embarkation date in mid-August, then just five weeks away. But it was too late. The French succeeded in hiring some commercial shipping in northern Castile. But for the rest of the fleet they looked to the Clos des Galées, the royal arsenal at Rouen. This was hardly realistic. The arsenal had been inactive for two decades. A large industrial enterprise like the Clos des Galées could not just be fired into activity at will. It took experienced shipwrights, oarsmen and officers. They were hard to find quickly after fifteen years of peace. On 15 August 1404 enthusiastic companies assembled at Brest and Harfleur, fired by the prospect of war against the regicide King of England. They included some of the most famous paladins of France and the Low Countries. But there were only sixty-two transports available to carry them including twenty hired Castilian carracks. The number was confirmed by the count made by English spies. It was about half what was needed. The Count of La Marche waited in Paris for the situation to improve while hostile voices muttered about his idleness and improvidence.[18]

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The troops destined for the march of Gascony did not receive their orders until June. By then all thoughts of besieging Bordeaux or Bayonne had been abandoned for want of ships and men. Instead, two comparatively small armies were formed, one at Limoges under the command of the Constable, Charles d'Albret, and the other in Languedoc under the 24-year-old Count of Clermont, the eldest son of the Duke of Bourbon. Both of them were ordered to concentrate on the more modest task of reducing the Anglo-Gascon garrisons in French territory.[19]

The Count of Clermont raised his banner at Saint-Flour in Auvergne in July 1404. He was joined on his way south by leading noblemen of Languedoc with their retinues and the southern seneschals with the levies of their districts. But he appears to have had no more than about 900 or 1,000 men-at-arms in all plus an uncertain number of infantry and bowmen. Their main objective was dictated by the interests of the Count of Foix, whose eldest son

John Viscount of Castelbon accompanied Clermont's army. The castle of Lourdes, dominated by its immense square keep on a cliff-top high above the Gave de Pau, stood in territory conquered by the counts of Foix at the end of the 1370s. The fortress had been held throughout that period by Jean de Béarn, an ageing *routier* captain and bastard cousin of the great Gaston Phoebus, who had ruled Béarn and Foix for much of the previous century. Jean's English allegiance had enabled him to occupy at least a dozen smaller castles of the region and to ransom much of the province, accumulating a considerable fortune in the process. These days he lived on his riches in Bordeaux, leaving his mountain enclave to be defended by his son, also called Jean. For the English, Lourdes was too far from Bordeaux to be of any real strategic value. But it remained a useful bargaining chip in the Bordeaux government's dealings with the Count of Foix. So they plied Jean with money and promises and urged him to hold out. By the time that the Count of Clermont came before the fortress in early August 1404 it was well-defended. The place was virtually impossible to take by assault, beyond the reach of artillery and too well provisioned to be starved out. Clermont did not have the stomach for a long siege. So he contented himself with the capture of some satellite castles and then made a humiliating truce by which he agreed to pay Jean de Béarn no less than 12,000 francs and 100 marks of silver to keep the peace for at least the next thirteen months. In September he withdrew towards Saint-Sever on the southeast march of Gascony. Here he occupied four minor places and tried without success to extract *patis* from the rest, before retreating north beyond the Dordogne and leaving the English to reoccupy the places that they had just lost. It was a small return for so much effort.[20]

Charles d'Albret achieved rather more, in a strategically more sensitive region. He raised his banner at Limoges in late August and on 1 September 1404 laid siege to Courbefy with an army of 1,200 men-at-arms and 300 crossbowmen. Some vestigial remains near the hamlet of Saint-Nicholas at one of the highest points of the Plateau Limousin are all that survive of this great twelfth-century fortress which was once one of the strongest places of the region. Unlike most of the remote garrisons, which were manned and commanded by Gascons, Courbefy was held by a group of English captains with a garrison that was at least partly English. Their leader, Thomas Hervy, was a Lancastrian loyalist, a former household officer of John of Gaunt, who had been sent out from England in 1401 to take command of the place. But Courbefy like Lourdes was too far from Bordeaux to be reinforced or resupplied and in 1404 its garrison had been weakened by the withdrawal of a large part of its strength

to England at the time of the rebellion of the Percies. Hervy's appeals for help were left unanswered. After a siege of seven weeks he agreed to surrender the place in return for a safe-conduct for himself and his garrison and a modest payment of 2,000 francs for his stores. In the meantime detachments from Albret's army made short work of Courbefy's satellite garrisons in the region. Most of them sold out rather than face the risks of an assault. None of these places was vital to the defence of Gascony, but they had a considerable symbolic value and their loss depressed spirits in Bordeaux.

At the end of November 1404 Guillem-Amanieu de Madaillan, who had taken charge of the defence of the city, reported to Henry IV that every significant fortress of his allegiance in Limousin and Périgord had now been lost. Unless Henry sent help urgently to the duchy, he added, the rest would probably be overrun in short order. This was an exaggeration, but in the event his sombre forecast was never tested. The French war treasurers had run out of money and the commanders were no longer able to pay their troops. When the Count of Clermont and the Constable finally joined forces in southern Périgord at the beginning of November they abruptly wound up their campaign instead of marching to the Gironde, as the English had expected them to do. Albret put his retinue into winter quarters at Cognac. The rest of the army was dispersed.[21]

Not long afterwards the French expedition to Wales came to an even more embarrassing end. The army had been cantoned around Brest and Harfleur since the muster date of 15 August waiting for the order to sail. As the delay continued their morale plummeted. Some threatened to desert. Some sat out the delay in their rain-soaked encampments. Some took to plundering the surrounding villages for food. Some waited patiently on board their transports. The Hainauter Jean de Werchin composed poetry in the cargo space of his ship. The men quickly got through their advances and began to accumulate wage claims greatly exceeding the lump sum paid to the Count of La Marche. He passed most of the time in Paris trying to raise additional funds for their wages. By the time he returned to Brest to announce that there was no more money to be had, the weather had turned. The wind was blowing from the west and storms lashed the coast of Normandy and Brittany, bottling up the fleet in its ports.

In October 1404 the Count decided that it was too late in the season to attempt the long passage to Wales. Rather than write off so much effort and expense he proposed to turn the operation into a plundering raid along the English coast. The troops were readily persuaded to agree. Loot was the only way of recovering their

expenses and back wages. Once the storms had abated, some ships were sent to reconnoitre the ports of the West Country. They returned on 21 October with reports of a large convoy of merchant ships lying fully laden in the roads at Dartmouth. This was probably part of the annual wine fleet waiting for the escorted passage to Bordeaux. So, on 11 November, the French boarded their ships, leaving their horses behind, and sailed into the Channel. The Brest and Harfleur squadrons successfully joined forces at sea and the combined fleet made for Dartmouth.

Unfortunately for La Marche's army, his noisy consultations about the change of plan had rapidly reached the ears of English spies. When the ships reached the Devon coast their enemies were ready for them. At Dartmouth the convoy was moored in the estuary of the Dart, fully crewed and filled with soldiers. A strong north wind made it difficult for the French to approach them. La Marche decided to continue west in the hope of finding easier targets. He captured some merchantmen off the coast and did some damage at Plymouth. But no landing in force was attempted until the fleet reached Falmouth. There the Count decided to land his whole army. They passed three days ashore in looting and burning. Meanwhile several thousand coast-guards were assembled from the surrounding region to march against them. La Marche's first instinct was to fight it out. He drew up his men in battle array. Both of his brothers received knighthood at his hands. But the promised battle never came. The coast-guard army turned out to be considerably larger than his own and their archers outranged the French crossbowmen. In the opening moments of the engagement volleys of arrows claimed many victims in the French ranks. Fearing another debacle like that of Guillaume du Châtel in April the Count sounded the retreat. The men withdrew in panic to the ships. Several of them were drowned as they tried to scramble over the sides. On the voyage back to France there was a violent storm. The fleet was scattered and at least thirteen ships were lost including the one in which all the armour and weaponry was stowed. Years later the Flemish traveller and diplomat Ghillebert de Lannoy remembered struggling to reach land in a small boat after his ship was flooded and sank in mid-Channel. The rest limped into Barfleur, Saint-Malo and other ports over the following days. These events were regarded in Paris as a national humiliation. La Marche was mocked as an incompetent and a coward. The contrast between the fate of French raids against the English coast and similar operations by the English against France was particularly galling.[22]

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On 6 October 1404 the English Parliament met in the unfamiliar surroundings of the Benedictine priory of St Mary at Coventry. It was an unpopular venue which had probably been chosen in the hope that the Commons would be more malleable away from the intensely political worlds of Westminster and the City of London. Unusually, Henry IV had ordered that no lawyers were to be returned to the Commons, part of a broader attempt to exclude troublemakers of the sort that had disrupted previous Parliaments. Henry's financial fortunes were at their lowest point. Rising disorder was reducing parts of England to a lawless anarchy, a problem that would persist for the rest of his reign. Gascony was defenceless. The garrison of Calais was on the verge of mutiny, its wages two years in arrears. 'We implore your gracious aid and support …' the men had written to the council in August, 'we beseech you out of reverence for God and St George and for the preservation of the town and castles here not to let necessity, disaffection and poverty force us to abandon the place.' But the most critical problem was in Wales. There had been no significant English military operations there for more than a year. The Prince of Wales, who had been ordered to march against the rebels in June, had declared himself unable to comply for want of funds, in spite of having pawned his personal silver. As a result substantially the whole principality was now under Glendower's control except for small enclaves around the surviving English garrisons. The great fortress of the Turbervilles at Coety in the rich vale of Glamorgan had been under close siege by the Welsh for many weeks while the King struggled to borrow money for a relief operation.[23]

The Chancellor, Henry's half-brother Henry Beaufort Bishop of Lincoln, told the Commons that the financial crisis had to be addressed at once 'leaving aside all other business'. They were ordered to be in their places by seven o'clock every morning, an hour earlier than usual. Yet even the most compliant Parliament of the reign passed five weeks in acrimonious discussion of schemes for funding the King's needs from the wealth of the Church. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Arundel, protested that the Church contributed as much by its prayers as the chivalry of England by its arms. When the Speaker of the Commons looked sceptical the Archbishop rounded on the knights seated about him. He accused them of heresy and of robbing the government by extracting improvident grants from a compliant King at a time when it was 'well-known that he had not half a mark to his name'. The Commons' proposals for appropriating the wealth of the Church were vetoed by an alliance of the King, the prelates and the lay peers. They eventually agreed to the heaviest programme of lay

taxation since the notorious poll tax of 1380: two standard tenths and fifteenths on movable property, an income tax of 5 per cent on the wealthy and a year's profits on all lands granted out by the Crown since 1377 to anyone other than the King's immediate family. The combined yield of these taxes together with the matching grant conventionally made by the clergy could be expected to come to well over £100,000. It was a large sum, but the Commons entertained completely unrealistic hopes about what it would buy. Henry was told that he would be expected to use it to fund the defence of the English coast, the reinforcement of Gascony, the maintenance of a fleet in the Channel and the North Sea, the suppression of the Welsh rebellion and the defence of the Scottish march. The grant was conditional upon effective steps being taken by 27 January 1405 to achieve all of these objectives. In a precaution which was becoming traditional the proceeds were required to be paid to special war treasurers who would answer to the next Parliament for their proper disbursement.[24]

It must have been obvious to Henry IV's ministers that the Commons' demands were impossible to meet. But they set to work at once to create at least the appearance of compliance. The Prince of Wales marched to the relief of Coety within days of the dissolution of Parliament. The remaining plans appear to have been approved by a great council at Westminster on 2 February, a few days after the Commons' deadline. They were extremely ambitious. A double invasion of Wales was planned for the spring: one in the north under the command of the Prince of Wales, the other in the south under the King himself. Including garrison troops nearly 8,000 men were expected to be deployed in these operations. There were to be two substantial war fleets. A fleet of forty-five ships was to patrol the Channel and the south coast for three months. The King's eighteen-year-old son Thomas of Lancaster, the future Duke of Clarence, was to be appointed as Admiral of England and put in command of a second fleet of sixty ships, including twenty 'great tower ships', to raid the coast of France.

The government's most ambitious plans, however, were for the reinforcement of Gascony. Henry had written from Coventry to the leading Gascon magnates promising that a large army would be sent to them, if not under his own command then under one of his sons. The initial idea was to send no fewer than 2,000 men-at-arms and 3,000 archers commanded by the King or his half-brother John Beaufort Earl of Somerset. It would have been the largest English army to set foot in the duchy for thirty years and the largest to go there by sea for more than a century. A fleet of transports was requisitioned in the ports of the West Country to carry this great

host, and an appeal was sent to the King of Portugal to send galleys to the Gironde to support the army. These vast projects, if they had been implemented, would have cost more than twice the proceeds of the new taxes and required shipping and manpower well in excess of England's resources. In the end, like Louis of Orléans' plans in France and for very similar reasons, they had to be considerably scaled down. The Channel fleet was reduced by more than three-quarters and its period of service halved. Thomas of Lancaster's fleet was reduced by a third and his mission merged with the project to reinforce Gascony. Instead of sending an army of 5,000 to Bordeaux under the Earl of Somerset it was now resolved that Thomas would go there with his army of the sea, about 2,000 men without horses, after completing his campaign of raids against French coastal settlements. Even this reduced force would have represented an impressive addition to the duchy's strength if it had ever reached Bordeaux.[25]

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In spite of the inglorious outcome of the campaigns of 1404 Louis of Orléans by now dominated the French royal administration. The continuing decline of Charles VI's powers, even in his moments of sanity, made it increasingly obvious that there would have to be a regency in fact if not in name and Louis was the only possible candidate. The death of Philip the Bold had removed one of the few remaining constraints on his ambitions. The only other figures of real political stature were the Duke of Berry and the Queen. The Duke of Berry was the senior of the King's two surviving uncles, a dignified and cautious voice on the council but hardly an insistent one. The Queen was the guardian of the royal children and the appointed arbiter between the princes under the ordinances, but she did not attend council meetings and had to exercise her influence behind the scenes. Both of them were mainly concerned to secure their own claims on the resources of the Crown and, in Isabelle's case, the future of her children. They were content to leave the active management of affairs to the Duke of Orléans. He assumed the general direction of the war on all fronts: on the marches of Gascony, in Picardy and Normandy and at sea. He had the support of all the great officers of state. His retainers were installed throughout the financial administration. He set about consolidating his position with a series of personal alliances with some of the leading political families of France: the Duke of Anjou, the Duke of Brittany, the counts of La Marche, Armagnac, Alençon, Saint-Pol and Harcourt and, on the north-east march, the houses of Bar and Lorraine. These alliances, generally embodied in formal treaties,

reflected Louis of Orléans' position as the natural ruler of France in the absence of his brother. As the Count of Armagnac declared in his own treaty, he had agreed to do homage to Louis because he was the 'closest to the Crown after the children of the King'.

The extent of Louis' control over the government was reflected in the growing scale of his appropriations from the revenues of the crown. In June 1404 he arranged the marriage of his eldest son Charles to the King's daughter Isabelle, the young widow of Richard II of England, with the immense dowry of 300,000 francs. The worthless claim of his new daughter-in-law to recover 200,000 francs of her old dowry from the King of England was sold back to the Crown for its full nominal value in cash. This was followed over the next year by a stream of gifts to Louis himself worth in total well over 400,000 francs. In addition Louis received generous grants of land which brought him measurably closer to his ambition of creating a consolidated demesne extending in an arc from the Loire valley round the east and north of Paris and reaching north-east as far as Luxembourg.[26]

The main victim of this largesse apart from the royal treasury was the house of Burgundy. The arrears of Philip's claims on the French treasury were left unpaid once he was dead. His pensions were nominally renewed in favour of his son but they were not paid either. The overall level of payments to the treasurers at Dijon and Lille, which had risen to its highest point in the last years of Philip's life, was reduced to a trickle. The proceeds of royal taxation in the Burgundian domains, which had been regularly granted to the old duke, were not regranted to his successor until April 1405 and then only briefly. The lavish special grants more or less artificially justified by reference to Philip's special services to the Crown came to a complete halt for two years before being resumed for a short period at a much more modest level. As a result the total receipts of the new Duke of Burgundy fell by more than half, from a high of nearly 700,000 *livres* in the financial year 1402–3 to about 320,000 *livres* three years later. This sudden and catastrophic reversal of the fortunes of the house of Burgundy was bound sooner or later to provoke a crisis among the princes of the house of France.[27]

Philip the Bold had left a complex succession. The duchy of Burgundy passed on his death to his eldest son, John Count of Nevers. The three substantial territories of Flanders and Artois in the north and the Imperial county of Burgundy east of the Saône had been brought to Philip by Margaret of Flanders upon their marriage and John did not inherit them until she died a year after her husband in March 1405. The two Imperial principalities of Brabant and Limburg, which had in practice been Burgundian

protectorates for years, had been promised by their ruler, Joan Duchess of Brabant, to Philip and his heirs. As a result of a family arrangement they passed after Joan's death in 1406 to the new Duke's younger brother Anthony. That left the third brother Philip to inherit the remaining territories in France, the counties of Nevers and Rethel and the scattered domains in Champagne. Nominally therefore there was a staged partition of Philip the Bold's great empire. But in practice it continued to operate as a single political unit. John cooperated closely with his mother in the year before her death and with his brothers afterwards. The impressive central institutions of the Burgundian state remained intact. The rulers of its component parts and of other territories such as Hainaut which moved in their orbit followed a common policy and drew together in difficult times. Their relations were faithfully reflected in the treaty which John made at the castle of Le Quesnoy in July 1405 with his brother Anthony and his brother-in-law, William of Bavaria Count of Hainaut, Holland and Zeeland. These three men, who between them controlled most of the Low Countries, agreed 'loyally to pursue each other's interests and honour in all our affairs' not only out of love and friendship, a commonplace of such documents, but for the 'great honour and advantage that will accrue to ourselves, our heirs and our territories'. As the head of the male line of his family the Duke of Burgundy became the dominant figure throughout the territories which his father had controlled. Basing himself in his father's Parisian palaces he also played the leading part in managing his family's difficult relations with the King of France and his councillors and ministers.[28]

Thirty-three years old at his father's death, John Duke of Burgundy was a short, bull-headed man of unprepossessing appearance, graceless, awkward and taciturn, a striking contrast to his urbane father and his extrovert cousin Louis of Orléans. But he was a man of formidable talents. He was an experienced military commander, the best that his dynasty produced, who had led the French contingent on the Nicopolis crusade and had endured more than a year of Turkish captivity after the enterprise ended in disaster. He was an excellent administrator who had for years deputised for his father in Burgundy and occasionally in Flanders and Artois as well. He took a genuine interest in the mechanics of power and understood the exigencies of government better perhaps than any other European prince of his day except Henry V. John knew how to select and reward his servants, and they repaid him with a steadfast loyalty even at the most difficult moments of his career. He played the part of a great prince well, living magnificently and holding one of the great courts of western

Europe. In a political world dominated by constant bargaining for advantage John proved to be an outstanding negotiator with an inspired instinct for his adversaries' weakness, who knew just how far he could press an advantage. But the most noticeable thing about the new Duke of Burgundy was his overpowering ambition. John was determined, uncompromising and completely unscrupulous. He was brutal, cunning and duplicitous, resorting readily to violence even when persuasion or compromise might have achieved more. Above all he lacked judgment. He was impulsive, an opportunist who rarely weighed the consequences of his actions or counted their cost. 'A devious mind, suspicious and wary, trusting no one,' wrote Olivier de la Marche, whose memoirs, written decades after John's death, faithfully reproduced the sentiments of the Burgundian court in which he had passed his career.[29] A few years after he had come into his inheritance he acquired the soubriquet 'the Fearless', but he was an unquiet soul who lived in constant fear. He fortified his Parisian headquarters, the Hôtel de Bourgogne, something which his father had never thought necessary. He never went out without a bodyguard.

As he lay dying at Halle, Philip the Bold is said to have exhorted his sons to 'hold the crown and realm of France always close to their heart'. John desperately needed to succeed to his father's political authority at the centre of affairs, if only in order to maintain the flow of financial subventions which had supported the Burgundian empire in Philip's day. He had some advantages in the snake-pit of Parisian court politics. He was the King's first cousin. His daughter Margaret was betrothed to the Dauphin Louis and his heir Philip to another of Charles's children, Michelle. The Dauphin's marriage was duly celebrated in August 1404 when the young prince was not yet eight years old, in spite of the opposition of Louis of Orléans who had always wanted him for his own daughter. These unions could be expected to secure the house of Burgundy's influence in the French state through the next generation of the French royal line so far as the fragile lives of medieval children could do so. Yet the new Duke of Burgundy was an outsider by comparison with his father and the other princes of the *fleur-de-lys*. He had never been close to Charles personally as in different ways both Philip of Burgundy and Louis of Orléans had. He did not have half a century of intimate involvement with the affairs of France to justify his claims to influence and subsidies. He had played almost no part in its councils before the beginning of 1405. His most experienced advisers urged him to spend more time in Paris, building up his influence at court and in council, but his appearances in the capital were fewer and shorter than his father's.

He made matters worse by a resentful and aggressive manner. John did not have the ready charm or open manner which had eased Louis of Orléans' path to influence and wealth. He had few true colleagues, only dependants and allies of interest or convenience.[30]

John the Fearless's political strategy was conceived in the first months after his father's death. It was to appeal over the heads of the small political community at the centre of affairs to a broader constituency beyond, which resented the corruption and inefficiency of the administration and the heavy burden of taxation. It was not a new programme. It was essentially the programme of the Estates-General of the 1350s. It was the programme of Charles the Bad, King of Navarre, the last French prince to break with the solidarity of his class, who had become the voice of radical reform and popular discontent in the same period. It was the programme of the Parisian *maillotins* of 1382 and their allies in the industrial towns of northern France. And it was the programme with which Philip the Bold himself had toyed briefly in 1402 before reaching a comfortable accommodation with his rivals on the French royal council. Its natural supporters were drawn from the Church, the University of Paris and a small but influential minority of radicals in the civil service. But above all it depended on the support of the larger French towns, which bore the brunt of taxation and whose mobs had provided the force behind the rebellions of the 1350s and 1380s.

Of these by far the most significant for its size, wealth and political tradition as well as its proximity to the seat of power was Paris. Over the following years John the Fearless would forge a close alliance with the radical politicians of the capital and with the mobs which they could conjure up from the city's maze of lanes and tenements. Philip the Bold, with his consummate skill in managing the closed political world of the royal court and his perennial suspicion of popular movements, would never have done what his son did. But John understood better than his father the strength of public anger generated by the spoliation of the Crown by the royal princes and their hangers-on. How far John really believed in his own programme is open to doubt. He seems to have had a genuine belief in administrative reform and in cutting back the luxuriant growth of the institutions of government. But there were contradictions at the heart of his political programme of which he can hardly have been unaware. His alliance with the urban mobs destroyed the power of the monarchy which he was bent on using for his own ends. The spoils of government which he hoped to wrest from the hands of his cousin depended on the continuance of taxation at wartime levels without the corresponding levels of

expenditure, the very principle to which his radical allies were implacably opposed. And the violence of his methods brought a new instability to French politics which led directly to civil war and ultimately destroyed him along with most of his enemies.

John the Fearless became Duke of Burgundy at a time when taxation had become a major issue. The *taille* of January 1404 was bitterly resented. It had been imposed at a time of depopulation and recession. It was collected on top of the *aides* which had been levied, ostensibly for war purposes, for years. It was justified by reference to military projects which had failed, in part because very little of the proceeds had actually been spent on them. Collection of the *taille* was widely resisted and in places had to be enforced with considerable brutality. The Queen and the Duke of Orléans were directly blamed both for instituting the *taille* and for diverting its proceeds into their own pockets. The story of Louis' seizure of the cash from the treasury tower was all over Paris at once. Rumour magnified the facts. During the summer of 1404 libellous sheets attacking him were being distributed in the streets of the capital and nailed to gates, doors and houses.[31]

These issues came to a head in the King's council early in 1405. The Duke of Orléans was determined to reopen the war with England in the summer on the largest possible scale and pressed for another *taille* of 800,000 *écus*. The Duke of Burgundy declared himself opposed. He succeeded in recruiting the Queen to his cause. Her main priority was characteristically mercenary. She wanted to be allowed to pawn the King's personal jewels in order to raise no less than 120,000 francs to give to her brother Louis of Bavaria, a transaction widely regarded as discreditable but which was approved by the council at the beginning of February, probably with John's support. His reward came a week later on 13 February when their alliance was sealed in a formal treaty. Over the following week the council argued about the proposed *taille*. The Duke of Burgundy denounced it as tyranny. He declared that if it was implemented he would not allow it to be collected in his own domains. His objections were supported by the Duke of Brittany and behind the scenes by the Queen. When it became clear that the majority was with the Duke of Orléans, John protested and stormed out. He summoned a group of senior officials before him, including the two first presidents of the Parlement de Paris, three masters of the Chambre des Comptes and the Provost of the Merchants of Paris, and repeated his protest to them. Then he left Paris in high dudgeon followed by the Duke of Brittany, while the council continued their discussions in their absence. The Duke of Berry wrote to Margaret of Burgundy in his most patronising vein

suggesting that she should bring her son to his senses. ‘He has been poorly advised,’ said the Duke; ‘one can tell that he is new to his domains and has no experience of government.’[32]

The new tax was finally agreed on 5 March 1405. The atmosphere in the city was exceptionally tense and the councillors hurriedly left for their suburban mansions before the ordinance was published. As they had expected it was received with rage in the streets of the capital. Its nominal purpose, to pay for the war with England, was regarded with overt cynicism. Unlike the similar imposition the year before it did not even have the semblance of royal approval, for apart from a brief interval in January and early February the King had been ‘absent’ since the previous autumn. The populace blamed the Duke of Orléans. A Burgundian official in Paris reported that anyone associated with him was obliged to go out with armour under his clothing and a weapon in his hand. New public order measures were introduced restricting the carrying of knives in public other than table cutlery. Louis was by no means confident that this would be enough. He warned his retainers in France and Germany to hold themselves ready to come urgently to his aid if violence should break out in the streets.[33]

The Queen, although she had in fact opposed the *taille*, was almost as unpopular as Louis was. She was the butt of venomous lampoons. There were stories of the King being left penniless and the young Dauphin starving as barrel-loads of precious stones were sent off in carts to support the enterprises of her brother in Bavaria. The anger extended well beyond the streets. After the Duke of Burgundy’s departure from Paris the officials whom he had summoned to hear his protest were interviewed by the Dukes of Orléans and Berry to discover what he had said and how they had reacted. Their answers were not reassuring. ‘It seemed to them’, they are said to have replied, ‘that my lord [of Burgundy] … was truly moved by pity and sympathy for the people and that his thoughts were sensible and praiseworthy.’ The two royal dukes were shocked and closed the interview at once. There were plenty of others willing to speak out. The Augustinian preacher Jacques Legrand, a rising political moralist who had been invited to preach before the court, took the opportunity to denounce the incapacity of the King, the vice and extravagance of the Queen and the ‘insufferable greed’ of the Duke of Orléans. Under Charles V, he declared, taxes had also been high but at least he had spent the proceeds in the greater interests of France. Legrand’s sermon was not well received by its audience. On his way home the preacher was threatened with violence by angry partisans of Louis and Isabelle. These signs of her mounting unpopularity caused much

distress to Isabelle, who soon regretted her brief dalliance with the Duke of Burgundy. There is some evidence that Louis of Orléans advised her to leave France for her own safety and take refuge in his domains in Luxembourg. She gave serious thought to this but ultimately decided to remain at court with her children. However, she remained uncertain about her future. By July she was transferring substantial sums to her brother from the proceeds of the *aides* to redeem his mortgaged lands on the Danube with a view to living there if she was forced to leave France.[34]

The division of opinion on the council about finance extended to strategy as well. The Duke of Orléans was determined to redeem his battered reputation as a war leader by completing the unfinished business of the previous year. He wanted to revive the abortive project to land an army in Wales and to continue the offensive against the English duchy of Guyenne. There appears to have been general agreement about Wales. The projected expedition was approved and the command conferred on one of the Marshals of France, Jean de Rieux, a venerable Breton professional in his early sixties who had fought with Du Guesclin at Nájera and with Clisson at Roosebeke. But there was a prolonged dispute about Gascony. Louis of Orléans was wedded to a southern strategy and before the King's latest lapse into incoherence had prevailed upon him to back it. Charles d'Albret and the Count of Clermont were ordered back to the Gascon march to continue the work which had been interrupted in November. An embassy was already on its way to Castile to call on Henry III to supply a fleet of war galleys for a siege of Bordeaux. But with the King now 'absent' the southern strategy was challenged by some of the other councillors. Its main opponent was the Count of Saint-Pol, the French commander on the march of Calais, who was normally an ally of Louis. He was supported by the Normans and Picards. Their main concern was with Calais' large English garrison, which was a constant threat to the security of the coastal provinces of the north. Saint-Pol pressed for all available resources to be concentrated on besieging the town. The council treated the question like a forensic argument and held two successive meetings to hear from each side in turn. The outcome is not recorded. Collating the reports of their spies in Paris the English King's officers in Calais concluded that the main French effort for the year would come in the south-west but that the enemy would mount a powerful feint against Calais in the hope of diverting England's attention away from the critical theatre.[35]

Their assessment was shortly vindicated. The French reinforced their garrisons in Picardy in March 1405. In the following month the Count of Saint-Pol began to make noisy preparations for a

campaign against the outer ring of fortresses around Calais. His army, about 700 men-at-arms and 500 Genoese crossbowmen from the garrisons of the march with some 1,500 Flemish infantry, advanced to the edge of the pale and pitched their tents in full view of the walls of Calais. The English ambassadors, who were in the town to deal with the long-drawn negotiations for an Anglo-Flemish treaty, wrote to their Flemish opposite numbers demanding an explanation. Did this presage a siege of the town? They received a firm denial. But on the night of 6 May 1405 Saint-Pol invaded the pale from the south, advancing across the marshy plain in front of the walls of Calais. A week later, on the 14th, he advanced with banners unfurled and attacked Marck, the important fortress north of Calais which guarded the coast road from Gravelines. The French occupied the small town at the base of the castle. They dug trenches around it, set up their siege engines and towards the end of the day launched a surprise assault from ladders on the curtain wall of the castle. They carried the curtain walls but the greater part of the garrison retreated to the keep and continued the fight from there. On the following morning it was the turn of the French to be taken by surprise. Richard Aston, the lieutenant-governor of Calais, led a powerful sortie from the town. The French rushed to man the trenches around Marck. But their Genoese crossbowmen had used up their ready supply of bolts on the previous day and the rest had not yet been unpacked from the carts. Before they could retrieve them the English archers had inflicted carnage on the defenders. The Flemings broke and fled. The rest of the French force followed them down the road to Saint-Omer led by the Count of Saint-Pol himself. The English recaptured Marck together with all the French artillery and four French standards including Saint-Pol's. The sixty to eighty prisoners brought back to Calais included the Master of the Royal Archers, that committed Anglophobe Jean de Hangest, the nemesis of successive English ambassadors at Leulinghem.[36]

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England's military plans for the year proved impossible to implement even in the diminished form which they had assumed by the end of March 1405. The main element was the seaborne expedition of the King's son Thomas of Lancaster, who was expected to conduct a series of hit-and-run raids against the French coast before proceeding to Gascony. In the event Thomas's first objective was the coast of Flanders. The consequences of attacking a region whose population was basically well-disposed to England had been considered with some care by the English King's council. In theory England's relations with Flanders were still governed by the

temporary treaty of March 1403 with the Four Members of Flanders. But the aspirations of the Four Members and the policy of the Count were two different things. The agreement had never been formally adopted either by Philip in his lifetime or by his widow after his death. Almost continual negotiations in Calais had failed to turn it into a permanent agreement. In the meantime there had been a sharp deterioration in the situation in the North Sea, where Flemish privateers had been particularly active and were often tacitly protected by the Duchess's officers. The capture of Robert Mascall Bishop of Hereford in September 1404 as he returned by sea after a visit to Rome aroused strong feelings in England, especially as there was good reason to think that the Duchess had connived in his subsequent detention for ransom at Dunkirk. After two years of fruitless diplomacy the English King's permanent representatives at Calais had become very gloomy about the prospect of a deal while Flanders was governed by a French dynasty with a corps of French officials dedicated to the interests of France. Their judgment was substantially right. as the internal correspondence of the dowager Duchess of Burgundy with her officials amply demonstrates. It did not help that the chief English negotiator, Nicholas Ryshton, was a nitpicker who could never get on with his Flemish counterparts. 'A most unbiddable and quarrelsome man', they complained. Henry IV's council had discussed with him the implications of ending the informal truce with Flanders. His advice was characteristic of the man. He thought that it would do no harm to remind the Flemings of the price of war.[37]

So, on about 14 May 1405, Thomas of Lancaster's fleet appeared off Dunkirk. The ships had double crews and a complement of 700 men-at-arms and 1,400 archers on board including no fewer than two earls and twelve bannerets. Assuming that the seamen were also armed this represented a total fighting strength of at least 5,000 men. The fleet fought its way up the coast of Flanders from Dunkirk to Sluys. Across Artois and Flanders troops were hurriedly recruited and rushed to the coast. But they were too late to stop the English from wasting the island of Cadzand north of the Zwin and then, on the night of 24/25 May, assaulting Sluys itself. The raiders were prevented from penetrating the town by a vigorous bombardment from the castle at the harbour entrance. But they destroyed the outlying villages, sacked their churches and carried off the bells as trophies. Ships were burned at their moorings in the outer harbour including three valuable Genoese carracks and French ships with cargoes estimated at 150,000 to 200,000 gold ducats. After five days ashore the English re-embarked and withdrew with their prizes. The raid was a sensation, provoking panic throughout

Flanders and much of northern France. The Duke of Burgundy was furious. He summoned more troops from as far away as Burgundy and concentrated them in the garrisons of western Flanders and Artois. He called on the Four Members to approve fresh taxes to support an army of 8,000 men. He marched in person to Sluys. At the end of June he sent emissaries to Paris to press the case for a full-scale siege of Calais upon the royal council. But the council's attention was concentrated elsewhere. Jean de Rieux was at Brest with some 2,600 men waiting for a favourable wind to carry him to Wales. Troops were gathering in Saintonge for the assault on Bordeaux. The council turned the Duke down flat. To add insult to injury Louis of Orléans procured his own appointment as captain-general in Normandy and the march of Picardy. This gave him control of the war in the north, as he already had in the south, and the direction of French military operations in some of the most sensitive parts of the Duke of Burgundy's domains in Flanders and Artois.[38]

From Flanders Thomas of Lancaster sailed south at the beginning of June 1405. The fleet burned its way down the coast of France from Boulogne to La Rochelle, attacking towns and harbours along the shore and penetrating up to thirty miles inland in search of opportunities for destruction and loot. In the Cotentin peninsula alone five towns and thirty-six villages were attacked including La Hogue, Barfleur and Montebourg. Many of them were left as charred ruins. This, however, proved to be the end of English operations against France in 1405. The original plan for Thomas of Lancaster to proceed to Gascony was abandoned along with all the other aggressive projects demanded by the Great Council earlier in the year.[39]

By midsummer the English government's coffers were empty. The first instalment of the Parliamentary subsidy had been spent and the second was not due until November. Reporting to an incredulous monarch, the council patiently explained where the money had gone. Much of it had been used to pay his creditors who had advanced money to pay for the expensive preliminaries. Part had gone to settle heavy accumulated arrears for service in Wales without which the men could not be persuaded to serve there again. Including sums expended on putting the King's ships into repair between £19,000 and £20,000 had been committed to operations at sea. The rest had gone on miscellaneous pressing payments for the defence of the Scottish march, the King's Scottish ally George Dunbar, the garrison of Calais, the royal household and the ordinary expenses of government. By July the King was borrowing heavily from syndicates organised by the Mayor of London and the familiar

pattern of delayed payments and dishonoured tallies had resumed.[40] But the decisive reason for halting Thomas of Lancaster's operations was probably not money, for his men had received their advances and were unlikely to desert in the middle of a lucrative campaign of plundering. They appear to have been recalled at the end of June because a major rebellion had broken out in the north of England.

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The central figure in the rising was the Percy Earl of Northumberland. He had been restored to the vast domains confiscated from him after the rebellion of 1403. Eventually he had even regained the custody of the royal fortress of Berwick. But he had lost all of his other royal offices including the wardenship of the march, which had been transferred to Ralph Neville Earl of Westmorland in the west and to the King's third son, John of Lancaster, in the east. John would in due course become an outstanding soldier and administrator, but in 1403 he was just fourteen years old and lacked experience even by the standards of an age in which responsibility came early. In practice the direction of royal policy passed to Westmorland on both sides of the Pennines. He was supported by an influential group of soldiers and officials associated with the King's duchy of Lancaster. The Percies and their allies were largely eclipsed. The resulting loss of status was profoundly wounding to Northumberland. It undermined his influence over his tenants and followers in the north-east as it was no doubt intended to. It also weakened his hand in his dealings with the border lords of Scotland, always a significant factor in Percy politics. For their part the Percy followers had grievances of their own, for with the removal of Northumberland from the wardenship of the march they found themselves more exposed to the financial problems of Henry IV's government. Neither Westmorland nor John of Lancaster was in a position to pay up from his own resources when the Exchequer failed them, as the immensely rich Percies had done. To these deep-seated regional issues, others added their own more personal grudges, many of them part of the bitter aftertaste of the Lancastrian revolution of 1399.[41]

On the night of 14 February 1405 Edmund and Roger Mortimer, the young sons of the late Earl of March, who were prisoners of Henry IV at Windsor, were abducted by Constance Lady Despenser. She was the sister of the Duke of York and the widow of Thomas Despenser, both of whom had been close to Richard II and among the leading lights of the Epiphany rebellion of 1400. The Mortimer children were dangerous symbols. Edmund would have had a colourable claim to the throne if he had ever chosen to advance it.

He had already been suggested as an alternative king in Hotspur's manifesto of 1403. After a brief manhunt the fugitives were caught in Cheltenham woods, apparently heading for south Wales. A Welsh squire was reported to be on his way to France to concert plans with Charles VI's ministers. Two days later Constance was brought before a great council hastily convened at Westminster. She accused her brother the Duke of York of having instigated the abduction. This allegation was apparently confirmed by Thomas Mowbray Earl of Norfolk, who admitted that he too had been privy to the Duke's plans. Mowbray was pardoned but Constance and the Duke of York were both imprisoned in secure fortresses and lost their lands and possessions until they were eventually pardoned in the following year. Henry seems to have tried to draw a veil over the whole incident and there is much about it that remains obscure. The likelihood is that the boys were to be taken to their uncle, Edmund Mortimer, a prominent partisan of Glendower, to serve as the figureheads of a rebellion in England. There is some circumstantial evidence that the Earl of Northumberland may also have been involved. Later that month his representative met the agents of Mortimer and Glendower in the archdeacon's house at Bangor. On 28 February they entered into a remarkable agreement to overthrow Henry IV and partition England between them, Mortimer taking the south and east of the country, Glendower the west and Northumberland the north. The record of this agreement is far from clear and its authenticity is not beyond doubt. But there are other reasons to believe that the Earl of Northumberland was concerting plans with the Welsh.[42]

In the spring of 1405 Glendower's forces began to move. In March a large Welsh force was surprised and routed by household troops of the Prince of Wales as it returned from a raid on the town of Grosmont in Monmouthshire. The English reckoned the body count at 800 or 1,000 fighters. Towards the end of April another heavy Welsh raid into Monmouthshire was attacked by a sortie from the castle of Usk and put to flight. The pursuit continued for several miles, claiming many Welsh lives cut down as they fled or drowned in the River Usk. Among the prisoners was Glendower's son Gruffyd, who would pass the rest of his life in the Tower of London. By this time formidable English forces were gathering on the Welsh marches. There were some 3,000 men at Hereford poised to invade south Wales under the King himself while more than 6,000 were operating in the north under the Prince.[43]

It was at this point, with the Welsh end of their planned rebellion on the verge of collapse, that the Percies and their allies raised their standard in Yorkshire. On 1 May 1405 a group of Yorkshire gentry,

almost all of them connected to the Percies, began to gather troops across north and west Yorkshire, publicly declaring their intention of correcting the problems of the realm and punishing unnamed 'evil doers' around the King. A few days after the first assemblies the rebels concentrated their forces at Topcliffe in the Swale valley by the Roman road from York. They drew themselves up in battle array with banners unfurled. According to government sources they were between 7,000 and 8,000 strong. Their true strength must have been much smaller for within a few days they were easily dispersed by a force commanded by the Earl of Westmorland and the young John of Lancaster. Most of the ringleaders were captured and some were later executed.[44]

The fiasco at Topcliffe provoked panic and disarray among the remaining conspirators. The Earl of Northumberland was forced to declare himself, perhaps earlier than he had intended. He gathered 400 men-at-arms and tried to achieve a swift *coup de main* by surprising the Earl of Westmorland by night at a castle belonging to the Lancastrian loyalist Sir Ralph Eure. The attempt failed. Westmorland was warned of his coming and fled in time. Realising that he was now compromised, Northumberland withdrew to the Percy fortress of Warkworth by the Northumberland coast. A squire of Henry IV's household who arrived there with a letter from the King was arrested and thrown in prison. Shortly the Earl was joined at Warkworth by Sir William Clifford, his faithful captain of Berwick, and by Thomas Lord Bardolf, a rich East Anglia landowner and a regular member of the royal council who had family connections to both the Percies and the Mortimers. Also with them were two prominent partisans of Glendower who were probably there as his representatives: Lewis Byford Bishop of Bangor, a former royal official who had recently thrown in his lot with the Welsh leader, and John Trevor Bishop of St Asaph. The Earl ordered all his castles in the north to be reinforced and provisioned. Then, as in 1403, he dithered, a declared enemy of the King but without a plan, a programme or an army. There was plainly a good deal of support for his cause in Yorkshire, which had always been the centre of Percy power. But the Yorkshire rebels had shot their bolt and failed. With very few exceptions the men of Northumberland did not lift a finger to help him.[45]

Instead support came from an unexpected quarter. Richard Scrope had been Archbishop of York since 1398. The reasons for his sudden emergence as a rebel leader have always been mysterious. Scrope was an unwordly cleric of scholarly tastes. Even that ardent Lancastrian partisan Thomas Walsingham described him as 'a man of well-known dignity and great learning and holiness of life'. He

was idealistic, muddled and wholly lacking in political guile or judgment. He had some family connections with the Percies but there is no evidence that he concerted his actions with them in 1405. Scrope seems to have regarded himself as a peacemaker, a mediator between Henry IV and his enemies. He professed himself convinced of the King's fundamental goodwill and willingness to retreat in the face of popular anger. There is little doubt that he was put up to it by Thomas Mowbray, who had arrived in York hoping to breathe life into the embers of the northern revolt. Mowbray was an ambitious, immature and resentful young man of nineteen who had already been involved in the plot to kidnap the Mortimer children and may well have feared that he was compromised by his connections with other conspirators. He had never forgotten that his family were hereditary Marshals of England, an office which had been transferred to the Earl of Westmorland along with the custody of many of the Mowbray estates during his minority.[46]

In about the middle of May 1405 Archbishop Scrope delivered an inflammatory sermon in York Minster. He denounced the intolerable burden of taxation on the clergy and the merchant community and the greed and corruption of the public administration and called upon the congregation to gather together to put these evils right. Shortly afterwards a manifesto was drawn up in which the same points were made in 'plain and inelegant' English. Scrope's manifesto was nailed to the gates of York and distributed among the surrounding towns. In a region suffering from disorder and crime and impoverished by war and depression it had a powerful impact. It is far from clear that Scrope intended to provoke an armed uprising. But when almost all the citizens of York able to carry arms came forward, supported by a mass of men from the surrounding region, the archbishop was intoxicated by his success. He allowed himself to be carried away on a wave of popular enthusiasm. He was seen fully armed surrounded by the mob that he had aroused, apparently enjoying himself.

Shortly, reports arrived that the Earl of Westmorland and John of Lancaster were marching on York. On 27 May Scrope and Mowbray led their unruly horde out of the north gate and arrayed them on a hillside across the Roman road at Shipton Moor about six miles from the city. On the 29th Westmorland's army appeared across the brow of the hill opposite and halted. He sent a herald into the Archbishop's camp to ask him what he thought he was doing. Scrope, who clearly had no idea of the gravity of his actions, showed the herald his articles of protest. He asked him to take the document and show it to Westmorland. Westmorland professed great interest and invited the Archbishop to a conference to discuss

it. Scrope agreed, bringing with him a wary and reluctant Mowbray. The conference took place on a square of ground between the two armies in full view of both. Westmorland had the articles read out and declared that they had been ‘nobly and justly conceived’. No one in his right mind could object to them. For his part he would do his best to get the King to accept them also. Since Scrope had achieved his entire purpose the Earl suggested that after drinking a cup with him in sight of both armies he should order his men to disperse. The naive archbishop agreed. As soon as his men had turned for home Westmorland put his hand on the Archbishop’s shoulder and arrested him. His companions, including Thomas Mowbray and Scrope’s nephew and military adviser Sir William Plumpton, were seized at the same time. They were sent under guard to Pontefract to await the King’s pleasure.[47]

The King was at Hereford when he heard about the Earl of Northumberland’s arrest of his emissary and the events in York. He abandoned the planned campaign in Wales and made straight for the Midlands with his army, arriving at Pontefract at the beginning of June. Scrope was accorded a brief and frigid interview without his cross of office, which was taken from him by force in the anteroom. Henry entered York on 7 June, passing through crowds of penitent townsmen, bareheaded and ragged with halters round their necks, ‘weeping and wailing wretchedly’. The prisoners followed in the King’s baggage train. On the following day, as Archbishop Arundel in the citadel pleaded with the King for his life, Scrope was summarily condemned to death in another part of the building by an ad hoc commission and led out to execution. The Chief Justice had refused to sit in judgment on an archbishop and had to be replaced by one of Henry’s household knights. Bearing arms in war, the court declared in justification of the sentence, was a repudiation of his priestly status and deprived him of his immunity. Scrope was beheaded outside the city walls in front of a sullen crowd, the only bishop to be executed in England before the Reformation. Mowbray and Plumpton died with him. The deed profoundly shocked the sensibilities of the time. Before long the archbishop had joined the long list of political martyrs whose violent deaths provoked pilgrimages that were at once an act of devotion and a political protest. Miracles were reported to have occurred at his tomb in York Minster. Eventually soldiers had to be posted there with orders to arrest anyone trying to make offerings.[48]

When the Earl of Northumberland learned of the debacle at Shipton Moor he sent his young heir (Hotspur’s son) for safety to Scotland and fled to Berwick, accompanied by Bardolf. Berwick castle was held by a Percy garrison. But it was difficult to defend

without possession of the town, which had its own independent circuit of walls overlooking the castle on the east. The mayor, who was responsible for the defence of the town, was ill-informed about events in Yorkshire and allowed himself to be bullied into letting Northumberland's men in. The Earl immediately appealed for support to the Scottish border lords. Bardolf brought in a large company of Scottish borderers raised by Henry Sinclair Earl of Orkney, one of a number of ambitious men vying to take over the dominant role once enjoyed by the captive Earl of Douglas. Their intervention was approved by the Scottish Warden of the March, James Douglas of Balvenie, and possibly by Robert III himself. Their reward was to be allowed to pillage and burn the town and carry off many of its citizens for ransom. This, James Douglas wrote to Henry IV a month later, was their revenge for the 'brennyng, slachtyr and takyng of prisoners and Scottis shippis' by Englishmen since the truce of 1403. Northumberland's next step was to send three of his retainers to the court of Scotland. Their instructions were to negotiate 'whatever alliance can be had' with the government of the Duke of Albany. By chance there was a French embassy at the Scottish court when they arrived. Northumberland's emissaries were instructed to approach them to explore the possibility of getting help from France as well. They carried letters addressed to Charles VI and the Duke of Orléans in which the Earl told them what he supposed they wanted to hear. He said that he was making war on 'Henry of Lancaster the present regent of England' in support of the claims of King Richard if he was alive and those of his widow Isabelle if he was dead. So far as he could support France's quarrel with Henry from Berwick he declared that he would willingly do it. But in the meantime he urgently needed their help.[49]

These letters were sealed on 11 June 1405. By this time Henry IV had ordered the forfeiture of all the Earl's assets in the north and advanced with his army to Ripon. In 1403 Northumberland's castles had defied the King for nearly a year after the defeat of Hotspur at Shrewsbury, but in 1405 the whole Percy empire collapsed in a matter of days. The reasons were largely political. The Earl's cause seemed doomed once the rebellion had been suppressed in Yorkshire. Northumberland's deal with the Scots must have lost him what support he ever had on the border. But Percy's captains were also confronting for the first time on the Scottish march the power of modern artillery which none of their castles had been designed to withstand. Henry had brought up a large siege train including a bombard which, according to the chronicler Thomas Walsingham, was 'so huge that it was believed that no wall could withstand it'. By the beginning of July almost all of Northumberland's castles in

the north were in the King's hands. Most of them surrendered without a blow. Warkworth had been garrisoned and provisioned for a long siege and its captain breathed defiance when Henry's herald called on him to surrender. But after seven salvoes of artillery he surrendered while he could still bargain for his life. On 6 July the King appeared before Berwick. Northumberland and Bardolf were unwilling to chance their lives upon a siege. They fled into Scotland on his approach, leaving the mixed garrison of northerners and Scots to fend for themselves. After a siege of six days Henry brought up his largest bombard. With its first shot it brought down part of a tower. The effect was as much psychological as physical. A man mounting the stairs inside the tower was crushed by falling masonry. The terrified garrison surrendered to the King's mercy. By the laws of war, however, having defied the King's first call to surrender they were entitled to none. The leading English defenders were beheaded beneath the castle walls. Henry Sinclair, the leader of the Scottish contingent, was taken for ransom. Alnwick, the only Percy stronghold still holding out, opened its gates a day or two later.[50]

Northumberland's appeal to the French and the Scots can hardly have been considered by the time his cause collapsed. But neither government had much inclination to intervene on his behalf. The Duke of Albany was engaged in delicate negotiations for the release of his son Murdoch from captivity in England. The Earl of Northumberland was a broken reed with nothing to offer the Scots except perhaps a bargaining counter to use in their negotiations with the English. He and Bardolf were offered asylum and committed to the custody of Sir David Fleming, another of the minor border lords trying to step into the boots of the Earl of Douglas. They were lodged in the episcopal castle of St Andrews, prisoners in all but name, in constant danger of being double-crossed by their reluctant hosts. Early in the following year a plan was hatched at the Scottish court to hand them over to Henry IV in exchange for the Earl of Douglas. Fleming, who had no desire to see the Earl return to his old place in the world of the border, tipped them off and allowed them to escape and flee to Wales. There they offered themselves as captains in the service of Glendower in return for his protection. Meanwhile the Duke of Albany conferred a cheap token of his goodwill on Henry IV by handing over Northumberland's treasonable correspondence with the French and Scottish governments.[51]

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The rulers of France were too preoccupied with their own disputes

to think of intervening in the troubles of England. The overweening ambition of the Duke of Orléans was beginning to trouble even his traditional supporters on the royal council. Louis had recently procured from the ailing King letters granting him the whole of Normandy. Normandy was the most valuable province of the royal demesne. It had never previously been granted as an appanage to anyone other than the heir to the throne. The grant provoked uproar among the Norman nobility and a significant section of the royal council, who in due course had it revoked. When, around the middle of July 1405, the King began to recover his wits the dissidents persuaded him to summon an extraordinary meeting of his council attended by all the royal princes in order to consider the future administration of his demesne and the state of the public revenues. At this stage neither of the rivals was in Paris. The Duke of Orléans was still in Normandy. He rushed back to Paris but arrived too late to halt the march of events. The Duke of Burgundy, who was in Flanders, decided to answer the King's summons with a large armed force at his back. He travelled to Le Quesnoy in Hainaut where he met his brother Anthony and his brother-in-law William Count of Hainaut and obtained their backing. John had substantial forces available in Flanders and Artois in case of another English descent on the coast. He called on them to meet him at Arras to march on Paris. On 15 August he set out at the head of a small advance guard of about 600 mounted men. He was sure that he could count on the support of the Parisians to let him into the city.[52]

John the Fearless's aggressive move provoked panic at the French court. The King relapsed into incoherence. For the next four months he was speechless, incontinent and unwilling to shave, wash or change his clothes or eat or sleep at regular hours. 'He was tragic to behold, eaten by fleas and covered in filth,' recorded Jean Jouvenel. The Duke of Orléans was stunned by the reports from Arras. He had been alive to the threat of disorder in the streets of Paris but he had not anticipated an attempted *coup d'état* by a prince of the *fleur-de-lys*. On 17 August, the day after the news of John's approach reached Paris, Louis hastily despatched orders to his officers and allies to raise all the troops they could. He then fled the capital accompanied by the Queen. They gave it out that they were leaving for the hunt and then rode as fast as they could for the royal castle overlooking the Seine at Corbeil. As she left the Queen wrote out her instructions to a small group of loyal allies in the city, including her brother Louis of Bavaria and the Master of the Royal Household Jean de Montaigu. They were told to take the Dauphin from the Hôtel Saint-Pol and bring him after them on the following

day together with his siblings and his child-bride Margaret of Burgundy. There was nothing that Louis could do to stop his rival entering the capital but he could at least stop him taking control of the symbols of power. No one bothered with Charles VI. He was hardly even a symbol now.

The afternoon of 18 August was hot, close and thunderous. The Dauphin, whose health had always been delicate, had just been bled and was lying exhausted and feverish in his apartment at the Hôtel Saint-Pol when the Queen's emissaries came for him. Brushing aside the protests of his attendants and doctors they carried him in torrential rain across the gardens of the palace followed by the other royal children to a boat waiting on the Seine. Late that night, the Duke of Burgundy had reached the village of Louvres fifteen miles north of Paris on the Senlis road when the news of the Dauphin's removal was brought to him. At dawn on 19 August he left Louvres with a detachment of cavalry and arrived in the city as it was stirring. There was a hurried conference with the other royal princes, none of whom had been consulted about the removal of the royal children. The Duke of Burgundy then rode at speed across the city with his men, to the astonishment of Parisians opening up their shops, and set out in pursuit. Twelve miles from the city walls they caught up with the Dauphin near the village of Juvisy on the Seine. He was being drawn along the road in a litter with an escort of soldiers under the command of Louis of Bavaria. The cortège was already surrounded by his soldiers when John rode up, dismounted, and cut the cords of the litter with his sword. According to his own account he approached his young son-in-law and asked whether he wished to continue his journey or return to rejoin his father in Paris. The Dauphin is said to have replied tearfully that he wanted to return. There was a brief altercation with his escort by the roadside. But the Orléanists were heavily outnumbered. The litter was turned round and brought back to Paris. The Parisians were ecstatic. A large crowd of armed and mounted citizens came out to meet the Duke and the Dauphin on the road and escorted them in triumph to the Louvre. There the young prince was formally handed into the custody of the Duke of Berry. A Burgundian garrison was brought into the fortress to ensure that he stayed there. The Queen and the Duke of Orléans were at Pouilly waiting for the Dauphin to join them when they heard the news that he had been taken back to Paris. They abandoned their dinner and fled to the Queen's castle at Melun. From there the Duke of Orléans addressed a furious protest to the Parlement of Paris, accusing the Duke of Burgundy of treason and calling on the King's servants to ensure that the Dauphin was not taken out of Paris or more troops allowed in.[53]

That evening the Duke of Burgundy fired off his own highly partisan account of the double kidnapping of the Dauphin and despatched it to notables, bishops and towns across the realm in case they should be misled by 'sinister reports' of the event. He invited them to send representatives to Paris to hear his proposals for the government of the realm. Two days later, on 21 August, without waiting for their response, John announced his proposals before a large gathering of dignitaries in the royal palace on the Cité. It was an invited assembly in the traditional manner of the Valois monarchy, not so much an occasion for deliberation as a carefully choreographed public statement. The Dauphin nominally presided, representing the King, who was raving behind the closed doors of his rooms in the Hôtel Saint-Pol. All the royal princes who were present in Paris including John himself were ranged on his right and the bishops and abbots on his left. The delegates of the city of Paris filled the body of the hall. The rector and professors of the University were there in strength.

John's councillor Jean de Nielles, a practised orator, spoke for him. His message was cleverly judged to attract support from the widest possible range of opinion. He declared that his master had come to Paris by the urgent command of the King. If he had come with a large armed force, said Jean de Nielles, this was only in order to protect himself, the King and the city of Paris against the violence of his enemies. Having come to perform his duty to the King he had a programme of administrative and financial reforms to improve the government of the realm. This included most of the grievances which had animated the streets of Paris. The King's family, attendants and ministers, he declared, had neglected his care and exploited his incapacity in order to obtain unjustifiable grants for themselves. They had purloined his jewellery and silver (this was clearly a reference to the Queen). They had allowed the administration of justice to lapse and the royal demesne to decay. Meanwhile the country was oppressed by taxation, levied with gross brutality by an army of tax farmers, judicial officers and sergeants. All this had been done ostensibly in order to finance a war with England. But in fact, although Henry IV was known to have his hands full with the Welsh and the Scots, almost nothing had been done to prosecute the war. On the contrary the English had been able to devastate the coastal regions of France while the proceeds of the war taxes had been pocketed by the King's ministers. John demanded that the King be treated with dignity and respect and his personal household and assets properly administered in his interest. He wanted the punctilious administration of justice by officers chosen on merit and not through influence or bribes; the honest

administration of the royal domain; an end to improvident and abusive grants; and the expenditure of tax revenues only on the purposes for which they had been imposed. The Duke of Orléans was not mentioned, yet almost every sentence implicitly referred to him. Everything that the Duke of Burgundy had done, Jean de Nielles concluded, had been done by the advice and consent of the Dauphin and the royal princes. At this point several of those present threw their gauntlets to the floor to challenge anyone who might call them traitors for supporting John's bid for power. The Dauphin brought the proceedings to a close by rising to his feet and declaring his approval of John's act in bringing him back to Paris.[54]

The Duke of Burgundy's attitude to the war with England was obscure and he was always careful not to clarify it. He was certainly not opposed in principle to fighting the English. He was as indignant as any of the royal family about the deposition and murder of Richard II. The operations of English privateers and the English garrison of Calais were more serious issues for him than for any of the other princes, since his Flemish subjects were the main victims. The attack by Thomas of Lancaster on Sluys and other ports of Flanders in May 1405 had been a personal humiliation at a time when he had just taken over the government of the county. In Jean de Nielles' speech the Duke's case against the government of Louis of Orléans was not that it had capriciously waged war on England but that it had not done it effectively enough. John's position resonated well with his public among the military nobility and in the streets. But like their counterparts in England these people had unrealistic ideas about how war was to be paid for. How far did John share these ideas? At this stage he may well have shared the widespread delusion that reforming the administration of the royal demesne, stamping out corruption and enforcing economies in the government service would be enough to fund the continued prosecution of the war. His advisers were reported to have believed that 600,000 *écus*, equivalent to three-quarters of the nominal value of the *tailles* of 1404 and 1405, could be saved each year simply by economies in the government's salary bill. If John believed estimates like these, he could well have thought that the war could be funded without resorting to the repeated reimposition of the highly unpopular *taille*.[55]

John the Fearless, however, was always ambivalent about the prospect of war with England, because of its impact on his Flemish subjects. He regarded himself as a French prince. He presided over a French-speaking court and a French-speaking administration. He himself was never fluent in Flemish although he got by. But the economic reality was that Flanders was much the richest and most

populous part of his domains, contributing a large and growing proportion of his revenues. With his succession the political centre of gravity of the Burgundian state shifted decisively to the north. John's central administration was increasingly carried out from Lille and Ghent rather than Dijon. He devoted more attention to his Flemish subjects and spent longer among them than his father had ever done. All of this was bound to affect his attitude to England.

On 21 April 1405, shortly after his mother's death, the representatives of the Four Members had come before him at Ghent to present their demands. Most of them related to the damaging impact of the war on Flanders. They resented the fact that the military command of the French captain-general on the march of Calais extended to Gravelines and its hinterland in south-west Flanders, which they feared would lead to its being covertly detached from the rest of the county. They were worried about the effect of English embargoes on the Flemish cloth industry and wanted to put a stop to the use of Flemish ports as bases for privateering operations in the North Sea. Above all they wanted a commercial treaty with England which would ensure that Flanders remained neutral in the Anglo-French war as it had in practice before the county had passed to the house of Burgundy. John agreed in principle to all of these demands including the last. He was determined, as he told the Four Members, to 'support the industry and trade of the county and increase its wealth' and had every intention of pursuing the negotiations with England. His father had made similar professions but John took them a great deal more seriously than Philip had. After the initial anger had passed Thomas of Lancaster's raids in May 1405 served only to increase his determination to reach an accommodation with England which would take Flanders out of the front line. A series of short-term truces between England and Flanders was agreed from June 1405 onward, while his representatives pursued with renewed energy the negotiations which had hung fire for nearly two years.[56]

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Within a short time of his arrival in Paris the Duke of Burgundy discovered the limitations of his position. It was one thing for him to present his programme to a stage-managed assembly of his own making in Paris but quite another to convert it into policy. John had no official status or powers and did not control any of the main organs of the government. The royal household, the council, the Parlement and the Chambre des Comptes were all dominated by men with a personal interest in the current system. John's proposals were not at all welcome to them. They were a threat to their jobs

and perquisites. Many of them were also allies or clients of the Duke of Orléans. The princes in Paris had allowed themselves to be associated with John at the public session in the royal palace, but they were less committed than they seemed. A Burgundian official writing home thought that they were stringing him along and that they were all covertly on the side of the Duke of Orléans. As soon as the Paris assembly had ended the princes moved to assert their collective control over the machinery of government. The prime movers were the King's uncles, the Dukes of Berry and Bourbon. They were supported by the shrewd and independent-minded Charles of Evreux King of Navarre, who reigned over his small Pyrenean kingdom but was by birth and preference a French politician. These men summoned a smaller meeting of prominent noblemen, prelates and officials immediately after the assembly in the palace. They agreed to appoint the Duke of Berry as captain of Paris. The captains of the Louvre and the Bastille were made to swear to take orders only from the council. When after a few days the King showed signs of emerging from his torpor, the councillors issued ordinances in his name commanding the rival princes to disarm and forbidding the King's subjects to join them.[57]

On 26 August 1405 a written summary of the Duke of Burgundy's programme was presented by a delegation of his councillors for action to the two principal institutions of the French state, the Parlement of Paris and the Chambre des Comptes. The judges of the Parlement gave a non-committal reply. They would always do their duty by the King, they said. In the Chambre des Comptes the reception of the document was even cooler. The president, that old Orléanist Jean de Montaigu Bishop of Chartres, told John's representatives that if it should please the King and his council to give them such instructions then they would do what they could to comply 'so far as it lay within their province'. They were officers of the King, they added later, after another Burgundian missive had been brought to them, but they owed duties not only to him but to his Queen and children as well. It would always be their object to satisfy them all. They returned a very similar answer to the representatives of the Duke of Orléans. These answers put John in a quandary. There was no other way for him to impose his will than to obtain the support of the King's council. This would not be easy unless the Duke of Orléans could be forced into submission.[58]

Faced with a political stalemate both sides turned to propaganda and then to violence. A written summary of John the Fearless's programme was distributed at the end of August to all the principal towns of the realm, the first of a long series of political pamphlets

which John would issue over the following years to build up popular support for his cause. Louis replied with a bilious circular giving his own version of events. These bombastic and repetitive exchanges continued into September. It is uncertain what impact they had on those who read them. At Senlis, where the Duke of Orléans' letters were read out to the officers of the town and then to a general assembly of the citizens, the councillors replied that they would act 'as good subjects of the King'. Their apprehensive reaction was probably typical. People were afraid of the direction that events seemed to be taking and unsure what to do.[59]

Melun had many advantages as a base for the Queen and the Duke of Orléans: proximity to Paris; a virtually impregnable site on its island in the Seine; good communications by road and river to Louis' domains on the Loire and in Champagne; and access to the treasury reserve of coin and bullion which was kept in a tower of the castle. Louis is said to have purloined 100,000 francs from this source, twice that much according to some sources. The troops which he had summoned to his assistance were already gathering outside the town in the fields by the Seine within days of the incident at Juvisy. They included the Counts of Saint-Pol and Alençon and the Duke of Lorraine with their retinues and the principal retainers of Louis' household and domains. He also succeeded in recruiting most of the organised bodies of troops then available in France. John Harpeden, a long-standing Orléanist, arrived with troops withdrawn from the march of Calais. The Duke of Anjou, another ally, was in the Gâtinais on his way to Provence to embark on his latest attempt to capture Naples from his enemies when he received Louis of Orléans' summons to return urgently to Melun 'without passing through Paris'. He turned back and placed his army at the disposal of the Queen. Negotiations were in hand with the Count of Armagnac and the Constable. They had more than 3,000 men under their command on the march of Gascony. Within a few weeks of his arrival in Paris the Duke of Burgundy's military position had begun to look precarious.[60]

Inside the city the princes tried to broker a deal. Louis of Orléans, however, was in no mood for compromise. The Duke of Bourbon had already made two journeys to Melun with the council's order disarming the rivals and his own proposals for an accommodation. He was sent away both times empty-handed. The Duke of Anjou tried to broker a compromise, but he succeeded no better. At the beginning of September he led another larger delegation to Melun. The Queen would not even receive them. Louis did receive them but with taunts. Seeing the representatives of the University among them he told them to mind their own business

and ‘go back to their schools’. A few days after this a final attempt was made by the Duke of Berry, the venerable patriarch of the royal council whom perhaps Louis would not dare to mock. But Louis was adamant. ‘Let him who has right on his side stick to his course,’ he said. By this time he was reported to have about 5,000 men under arms. On 5 September they struck their camp and advanced on Paris, bearing pennons with Louis’ motto, ‘Je l’envie’ (‘I want it’).[61]

In front of them the capital was armed for a siege. The Duke of Burgundy had been joined in the city by his brother Anthony and his ally the worldly prince-bishop of Liège and their troops. More soldiers were continuing to arrive from Flanders, Burgundy and the Low Countries. They paraded in the streets behind pennons marked with a Flemish motto ‘Ich houd’, a direct answer to his rival’s motto which might be roughly translated ‘I am keeping it.’ The new arrivals nearly doubled the army of the Duke of Burgundy, bringing its strength to more or less the same level as his rival’s. At the end of the month the total number of men-at-arms at John’s disposal rose to 4,560 at a cost, according to his accountant, which was ‘horrible to relate’. In addition to these, large numbers of men arrived to defend Paris who were by no means Burgundian partisans but were appalled by the prospect of an Orléanist assault on the capital of France. John had already garrisoned the Louvre. Louis of Bavaria’s garrison in the Bastille had been expelled and replaced by Burgundian loyalists. The Hôtel de Bourgogne was stuffed with weapons and ammunition and the streets around it blocked by manned barricades. The Duke of Berry followed suit at the Hôtel de Nesle, his headquarters on the left bank. All the gates of the city were closed and sealed up for the first time in twenty-four years except for four which gave onto the main axial roads. Houses were demolished around the principal urban fortifications and chains stretched across the Seine to stop an attempt to land troops on the strands of the river. The citizens organised night watches in shifts of 500 men. Piles of stones were collected at street corners to assail invaders and some 600 iron chains were forged in the space of a week to block street crossings and bridges. In the university quarter on the left bank the students armed themselves for the coming fight, while the rector and professors cowered with the princes in the comparative security of the Hôtel d’Anjou. The population was heart and soul with the Duke, as the Castilian ambassador reported. Or at least, as a devout Orléanist put it, the ‘common people’ were. But even they were uneasy. They were afraid of the vengeance of the Duke of Orléans if ever an accommodation between the princes restored him to a measure of his former power. Orders to arm against him were therefore issued in the name of the Dauphin. The

young prince cannot have understood much of what was done in his name, but his value as a seal of authority had never been greater.[62]

On 20 September 1405 the Duke of Orléans reviewed his troops in the plain south of Paris. They began to spread out in small groups across the Beauce and the Gâtinais. On the following day the first Orléanist companies penetrated east of the Seine and invaded Champagne. Much of the Île de France was wasted by the troops of either side. Peasants abandoned the harvest to find refuge in walled towns and castles. A stream of refugees poured through the gates of the capital. There had been no time to stock the city against a siege. The vast daily traffic which was required to feed the city was suddenly reduced to a trickle and fresh supplies could only be brought in with an armed escort. Within a few days of the opening of the campaign both armies began to run out of food. Louis of Orléans, who had no supply train, tried to quarter his army in the fertile region north of the Marne but the inhabitants of Meaux, who controlled the only practicable river crossing, refused to open their gates. Divisions appeared in the ranks on both sides. The Queen's household was reported to be riven by dissent. In Paris the council was paralysed by the growing doubts and disagreements of the princes. It was, however, the Orléanists who lost their nerve first. Towards the end of September they resolved to open negotiations. On 8 October Louis collected his army together in the Bois de Vincennes on the east side of the city. Fear gripped the citizens. The possibility of a sack of the city was openly discussed. The novelist Christine de Pisan stayed up for much of the night writing an emotional letter to the Queen appealing to her to save 'this wounded and battered realm'.[63]

In fact the danger had passed. The growing difficulty of supplying their armies forced both protagonists to negotiate. The Duke of Burgundy was also feeling the strain financially. He was selling annuities, pledging his jewels and borrowing from the towns of Flanders and Burgundy. We know less about the finances of his rival but it would be surprising if he were not also in difficulty. By the end of September talks were in progress in the castle of Vincennes. They turned mainly on the Duke of Burgundy's reform programme as he had outlined it to the assembly in Paris on 21 August. John insisted that before he would dismiss his troops the Queen, all the royal dukes and the leading councillors would have to swear to work to put it into effect as soon as the King had recovered his senses. Louis of Orléans' position was equally simple. He was the closest blood relation of the King and saw no reason to accept any limitation on his right to govern in the King's 'absences'. His councillors and allies were more realistic. It was obvious that

there was a good deal of support for the Duke of Burgundy. Unless he got most of what he wanted the divisions of the realm would not be healed. Louis of Orléans was finally persuaded by his councillors to submit. On 16 October he and the Queen met the Duke of Burgundy and his two brothers on the fortified bridge over the Seine at Charenton to seal the terms. They swore to keep the peace and be forever brothers. They took communion from a shared wafer, then ate and slept together as a mark of reconciliation. That afternoon the agreement was proclaimed by the heralds at the Parlement and the Châtelet. A week later, with the troops dismissed on each side, the Queen and Louis of Orléans entered Paris together, escorted by the Dukes of Berry, Burgundy and Anjou and the King of Navarre, to be greeted by outward rejoicing and inward fearfulness.[64]

On 7 November 1405 Jean Gerson preached a sermon before the assembled royal princes. Gerson had been a pensioner and almoner of Philip the Bold and was still generally associated with the house of Burgundy. But the constituency for which he was speaking on this occasion was the University of Paris of which he was Chancellor. Now a declining presence in the world of learning, the University had become a major force in the domestic politics of France in spite of the fact that many of its students and teachers were not French. The void left by the papal schism in the governance of the Church and the declining prestige of the Crown under Charles VI had contributed much to a situation in which, as a jaundiced contemporary observed, the University 'poked its nose into everything'. The King and his council consulted it on the great affairs of state. The Dukes of Orléans and Burgundy solicited its opinions. Its leading lights preached before the court. They supplied confessors to the kings and princes. The College of Navarre, where Gerson himself had been educated, had become famous as the training ground of future civil servants. The University was not a monolithic force, but the great majority of its masters and students were supporters of the Duke of Burgundy. When he had entered Paris with his army in August they had lost no time in declaring their support. Their leaders attended his councils daily and in large numbers, all talking at once. But it was not only as a moral and spiritual authority that the University spoke. Based in some sixty colleges and religious houses clustered on the slopes of the Montagne-Sainte-Geneviève on the left bank of the Seine, it numbered about 200 masters and 1,600 students engaged in formal courses. But the student body amounted to more than 10,000 men when private students, resident graduates and other hangers-on are included, not to speak of beadles, scribes, booksellers and

papermakers, messengers and functionaries who depended on the University for their livelihood. This large mass of young, disputatious, unmarried men, notorious for their disorderly behaviour and immune from ordinary legal process, contributed much to the volatility of Parisian political life.[65]

Gerson's sermon *Vivat Rex* was destined to become one of his most celebrated writings. It was intricate and prolix and not particularly original. But few pieces have expressed so exactly the great issues of the time when they were delivered. 'We are called', he said, 'to speak of the life of the King, of the King's interest and of the public interest.' No institution was as well-placed to speak of these things as the University of Paris, whose 'gaze and thoughts extend to the whole realm of France'. Gerson believed in a primitive version of the social contract, the notional bargain between the sovereign and his subjects which explained and justified the state. Each was bound to the other by mutual obligations. The sovereign performed his own obligations by administering justice through autonomous judicial bodies, the Parlement and the Chambres des Comptes; and by listening to the advice of the great corporations which embodied the collective wisdom of society: the royal council, the Estates-General and the University of Paris. But, thought Gerson, for these duties of the sovereign to have any reality, his powers had to be concentrated in a single individual with the independence that came of holding his powers by hereditary right. For a subject, however great (he was of course referring to the Duke of Orléans), to take power out of the hands of the monarch was offensive to the whole idea of monarchy. If anyone other than the King was to claim the King's powers, it could only be the Dauphin in whom the King was, so to speak, reborn and who might therefore be regarded as 'essentially one person with the King'. Drawing on imagery that dated back to the twelfth-century philosopher John of Salisbury, Gerson likened political society to the human body with the king at its head, whose health depended on the perfect coordination of the head and the limbs. His analysis of the ills of society was the stock-in-trade of contemporary preachers and moralists: ill-paid soldiers, venal judges and too many officers of justice, the purchase of offices, oppressive taxation. But it was expressed with a rhetorical force which rose above the tired metaphors of rival orators. 'We are witnessing', he said, 'the wretched and discreditable decay of this realm.'[66]

Notes

1
Vale (1970), 9–10.

2

Status: *Foed.*, vii, 626–7, 825–6; *E. Perroy, *L'Angleterre et le grand schisme d'occident* (1933), 414–15. Courbefy *patis*: BN Coll. Bourgogne 21, fol. 34vo.

3

Harpeden: Gonzalez, App., 280–1; Demurger, 262–3. Armagnac: BN Coll. Doat 208, fols 66–67; 211, fols 8–12 (Paris hôtel); AN K56/252, 3 (retainer).

4

Quoted in Vale (1970), 48.

5

Durfort: *Foed.*, viii, 117–18, ix, 259; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 324.

6

PRO E364/51, mm. 2–2d; Vale (1970), App. I, Tables 1, 4–7. Farringdon: BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fols 69–71vo; PRO E364/51, m. 2–2d (Farringdon).

7

Manpower: BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fol. 66 (1401 estimate). Retinues of Seneschal (*Foed.*, viii, 117–18), and sub-seneschals of Agenais (PRO E101/69/2 [302]) and Landes (PRO E28/10, July 1401); *CPR 1399–1401*, 553); garrison of Fronsac based on 1409 strengths (PRO E364/47, m. 3 [Swinburne]); BL Cotton Caligula D III, fol. 141 (Gascon nobles, before 1401). Money: BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fol. 66; *Roy. Lett.,* i, 452. Cost of Fronsac: *Proc. PC*, i, 352; PRO E28/23 (25); E101/69/2 (326).

8

Froissart, *Chron.* (KL), xvi, 213–14; Vale (1970), 32–9 (Bayonne); PRO C61/107, m. 6, 12 (Dax, Libourne); *Foed.*, viii, 127–8 (Bordeaux). The usurpation of the Seneschal's office by Montaut, mentioned only in *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 200–2 under the year 1404, and the pardon granted to Bordeaux on 10 May 1401 for unspecified 'usurpations' (*Livre Bouillons*, 309) seem to refer to this incident. He was reconciled by 1402: BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fol. 69.

9

*Martinière (1913); Froissart, *Chron.* (KL), xvi, 216–17.

10

*Martinière (1913), 340; Flourac, 7–26; *Vaissète, x, 1888–92; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 440–1. Homage: BN Coll. Doat 208, fols 279–280vo; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, ii, 776–8. Orléans alliance: AN K56/25.

11

Non-confiscation: see *Roy. Lett.*, i, 438–9; PRO E28/14 (credence of Jean de Fau, 22 July 1403). Commitments in Paris: *Foed.*, viii, 223; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 448. Chalais: *Livre des hommages*, 73–4 (Peyroat's lands); AD Pyr.-Atl. E421/106; PRO C61/109, m. 11. Bouteville: AD Pyr.-Atl. E421/106; *Inv. AC Périgueux*, 93, 94; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 446; *Livre des hommages*, 37, 73 (Pommiers' lands); *Roy. Lett.*, i, 446–57 (cf. original at BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fols 9, 14, which is badly damaged and inaccurately reconstructed by the editor).

12

Durfort and others: PRO E403/564, mm. 13, 14; *CPR 1399–1401*, 271; PRO E101/69/2 (302) (Caumont's indenture). Bowet, Trailly: *Foed.*, viii, 141–2; PRO E364/34, m. 7 (Bowet). Ugoccione: PRO E28/10 (28 Aug. 1401); *Roy. Lett.*, i, 439–40.

13

Proc. PC, i, 119; PRO E101/69/2 (308), C61/108, m. 7; *CPR 1399–1401*, 551; *Inv. AC Périgueux,* 93; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 324–5; BN Fr 14371, fol. 147 (act of aggression); *Issues Exch*., 297. Instructions: *Foed*., viii, 223–5; PRO C61/108, m. 16. Ct. of Périgord: *Inv. AC Périgueux*, 93; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 326, 328, 330, 336, 341. Gournay: PRO E28/10; *CPR 1399–1401,* 553. Craddock, Farringdon: PRO C61/108, mm. 19, 10. Thorpe: PRO C61/108, m. 10, 6; *HoC*., iv, 598–600. Courbefy: PRO E28/9. Durfort: *Proc. PC*, i, 181; BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fol. 31.

14

Rutland was still in Bordeaux on 27 April 1403 (PRO E101/184/13) but in England by 17 May (*CPR 1401–5, 235*). Plots: 'Some Durham Documents', 199. Embassy: *Proc. PC*, i, 222–3. Luttrell: *Proc. PC*, i, 222–3; PRO C61/109, m. 2; *CCR 1402–5*, 521. On him: *HoC*., iii, 656–60 (He was at Calais by Nov. 1399: PRO E28/26).

15

Diversion of funds: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 140, 228. South-west: BN PO 24/Albret/22; BN Fr. 20692, p. 178; Fr. 32510, fol. 341. Wales: BL Add. Ch. 50; BL Egerton Ch., 19; Jarry, 309–10.

16

Welsh situation: 'Ann. O. Glyn Dŵr', 152; *Eulogium*, iii, 401; *Orig. Letters*, Ser. II. i, 43; Usk, *Chron*., 176. Siege of Cardiff: PRO E364/39, m. 5; E101/44/5. Glamorgan: J. E. Lloyd, 89, 91–2. Embassy: *Foed*., viii, 365–8.

17

BN Fr. n.a. 7622, fols 488–488vo, 526–7; Cochon, *Chron*., 209–10; *Titres Bourbon*, ii, no. 4553A. La Marche and Orléans: AN K57A/16. Weapons: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 164–6.

18

Clos des Galées: BN Fr. n.a. 7622, fols 458–461vo; *Doc. Clos des Galées*, i, nos 1599, 1600, 1602–3, 1605. *Castile: Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 156–8; Jouvenel, *Hist*., 161–2; *Titres Bourbon*, ii, no. 4553A. English truce: *Foed*., viii, 345–6. Shipping shortage: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 166; Cochon, *Chron*., 209–10; *Proc. PC*., i, 233–4; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 222. Shipping capacity: Sumption, iii, 890n^{28}.

19

Albret: BN Fr. 32510, fol. 341vo, Fr. 32511, fol. 1. Clermont: Vaissète, ix, 994.

20

Chronographia, iii, 239–40; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 206; BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fols 79–79vo, 83; PRO SC1/51/69; AN JJ162/5; *Doc. Durfort*, no. 1405 [18]; *Chronographia*, iii, 240–1 (inaccurate on the agreement with Jean de Béarn); 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 330; BN Fr. 20692, p. 178 (cost); and, generally, Pépin, 8. On J. de Béarn and the English: PRO C61/97, m. 5, 61/108, m. 26, C61/110, m. 3, SC8/187/9312; *Roy. Lett*., i, 346–7.

21

BN Fr. 32511, fols 1, 2; BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fol. 79–79vo; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 202–6; *Chronographia*, iii, 241–2; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 329. Hervy: PRO E28/9; *CPR 1405–8, 10; Reg. Chichele*, ii, 213. G.-A. de Madaillan: PRO E28/15 (28 Nov. 1404); SC1/51/69. End of campaign: BN PO 24/Albret/69–71, 78, 84–5; BN Clair. 79, p. 6212, 85, p. 6704, 113/16–17; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 330.

22

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 222–8; *Chronographia*, iii, 242–5, 244n^{1}; Jean de Werchin, 'Songe de la barge', 77–8; *Foed*., viii, 374; Monstrelet, *Chron*., i,

69–70; Cochon, *Chron.*, 209–10; Lannoy, *Oeuvres*, 10–11.

23

St Albans Chron., ii, 418, 794; *Eulogium*, iii, 402. Lawlessness: Powell, 119–24. Calais: *Roy. Lett.*, i, 289–93, cf. 384–5. Wales: *Proc. PC*, i, 231–2; *Anglo-orman L.,* no. 296; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 290–1 [11–12].

24

Parl. Rolls, viii, 288–90, 294–5 [8–10, 22]; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 420–2, 794–802; *CFR 1399–1405*, 282–3, 289; *Rec. Convoc.*, iv, 280–1, xiii, 288–9.

25

Coety*: CCR 1402–5*, 478–9; *CPR 1401–5*, 475; PRO E101/44/1. Great council: Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii, 268. Wales: *Proc. PC*, i, 251–3; *CPR 1405–8*, 6. Fleets: PRO E101/43/34 (19), E101/43/38 (3/8, 9), PRO E101/69/2 (312, 314), C76/88, m. 9; *Foed.*, viii, 388–90. Gascony: PRO E28/15 (5 Nov. 1404); *Proc. PC*, i, 244–6, 280–1 (misdated). Scaled-down plans: *Proc. PC*, i, 250–1, 268; PRO E28/20 (18 Apr. 1405).

26

Louis' war powers: BN Fr. 20692, p. 178; Fr. 32510, fol. 341; *Jarry, 450–1. Control of administration: Nordberg, 57. Alliances: AN K56/8–9, K57A/1a, 16, K56B/252, KK267, fols 75vo–76, 113vo; *Lettres de Jean V*, i, nos 342; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 168. Appropriations: AN K55/271, 2, 3, 29; *Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 609–10; L. Mirot (1914 [2]), 333–4; *Ord.*, ix, 700–2; Jarry, 310–12.

27

Nordberg, 30–4, 36; Rey, ii, 599–601; *L. Mirot (1914 [3]), 395–6; Pocquet (1940–1), 109–10; *Plancher, iii, no. 237.

28

Partition: *Rec. Ord. Pays-Bas*, iii, nos 2–4. Treaty of Le Quesnoy: *Plancher, iii, no. 247.

29

Olivier de la Marche, *Mémoires*, ed. H. Beaune and J. d'Arbaumont (1883–8), i, 83.

30

Dying advice: Pisan, *Livre des fais*, i, 151; cf. *Plancher, iii, PJ. no. 250 (p. ccxlvii). Marriages: *Chronographia*, iii, 249; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 98, 249; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 212–14. Attendance at council: L. Mirot (1938), 165–6.

31

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 140, 228; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 288.

32

Louis of Bavaria: Jarry, 317–18; *Collections du Trésor,* 38–9. Alliance: *Plancher, iii, no. 234. Council: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 230–2; AD Nord B18824/23910 (Queen's support); AD Nord B18824/23923 (later protest); *Itin. Jean*, 345. Berry's letter: AD Nord B18224/23895.

33

Tax agreed: BN Fr. 26034/3724–5; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 131. Flight of princes: AD Nord B18824/23924. Hostility to Louis: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 226, 232, 256; AD Nord B18824/23910 (concealed armour); AN KK267, fols 51, 93vo, 106–9, 113, 113vo (retainers warned).

34

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 232, 266–74, 288–90; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 171. Officials interviewed: AD Nord B24824/23923. Plans for exile: Coville (1932), 352–5; BN Fr. 6537/159; Rey, ii, 191.

35

Southern strategy: BL Egerton Ch. 19 (13 Feb. 1405); *Victorial*, 139–40. Council meetings: AD Nord B18824/23910; PRO E28/20 (18 Apr. 1405); *Proc. PC*, i, 250.

36

PRO E28/20 (18 Apr., 24 Apr. 1405); *Cotton MS Galba*, 199, 215, 218–21, 226–7, 234–5; *Chronographia*, iii, 249–50; *Foed.*, viii, 397; *Chronographia*, iii, 249–54; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 436; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 100–4; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 258–62. Prisoners: *Varenbergh, 494. Hangest: AD Côte d'Or 1543, fol. 100vo.

37

Paviot, 53–5; *Roy. Lett.*, i, 316, 386; *Cotton MS Galba*, 146–7, 153, 158. Duchess's correspondence: see AD Nord B18824/23889. The Duchess's council agreed on 7 March 1405 to authorise an Anglo-Flemish treaty on terms that Flanders would not be used as a base for French attacks on England, but only on condition that its other terms should be satisfactory to them: AD Nord B18824/23911, B286/15037. Ryshton: AD Nord B18823/23530 ('unbiddable'); *Cotton MS Galba*, 175, 243–4

38

Flanders raid: *Proc. PC*, i, 259–60, 263–4; PRO E101/43/38 (4/57); *Varenbergh, 493–5; *Hanserecesse*, v, nos 253, 256; *Cotton MS Galba*, 243–5; AD Nord B549/151237; Morosini, *Chron.*, i, 182–9; Brandon, 'Chron.', 98–100; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 436–8; *Chronographia*, iii, 255–7. Thomas's strength: *Foed.*, viii, 389–90. Coast reinforced: *Handelingen (1405–19)*, nos 15, 17; AD Nord B18823/23467; Dixmude, *Merkw. geb.*, 25. John's reaction: AD Côte d'Or B11738, 11754; Brandon, 'Chron.', 100–1; *Chronographia*, iii, 257–8; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 107–8; *Handelingen (1405–1419)*, no. 18. Brest: Cochon, *Chron.*, 211; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 322; *Chronographia*, iii, 258. Saintonge: BN PO 24/Albret/101, 104; 2042/Morant/3; 2765/de Ste-Maure/14; 2861/Tour d'Auvergne (de la)/15. Captain-General: Jarry, 450 (correcting '6 jui [n]' to '6 jui [llet]', see BN Fr. 32510, fol. 341).

39

St Albans Chron., ii, 438; Cochon, *Chron.*, 211; *L. Mirot (1914 [3]), 402; BL Add. Ch. 51.

40

Proc. PC, i, 266–70; Steel, 92–3.

41

Rot. Scot., ii, 164, 172; *Proc. PC,* ii, 91–5; John of Lancaster, 'Some letters', 23; A. King, 149–50, 153–4; Arvanigian (2008), 96–101.

42

Mortimer children: *Cal. Signet L.*, no. 936; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 430–2; *Eulogium*, iii, 402; 'Fundat. Wygmore', 355; *GEC*, iv, 281; *Foed.*, viii, 386–7; *CCR 1402–5*, 426, 435–6; *CCR 1405–9*, 14–16. Bangor agreement: *Chron. Angl.* (Giles), 39–42.

43

Foed., viii, 390–1; *Proc. PC*, i, 248, 251–3; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 470; Usk, *Chron.*, 212 (with a different date); 'Ann. O. Glyn Dŵr', 152; *CPR 1405–9*, 6; PRO E101/43/38 (4/77); E364/43, m. 1 (Arundel), E364/44, m. 4 (Beauchamp).

44

Parl. Rolls, viii, 407–8 [1–4]; Hardyng, *Chron.*, 363; *CPR 1405–8*, 69; *Proc. PC*, i, 262. For the gentry leaders, see Walker (2003), 179–80 (the author's argument that they acted independently of Northumberland seems

implausible); *Cal. Inq. P. M.*, xviii, nos 1152–4 (date: 21 May, at no. 1155, is too late).

45

St Albans Chron., ii, 434, 440; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 409 [6]; *Proc. PC*, i, 262; A. King, 152–3. On Bardolf: Wylie (1884–98), ii, 174–6. Welsh representatives: Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 64–6. On Byford and Trevor, see J. E. Lloyd, 116–19, 123–4.

46

Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii, 269. Mowbray: *Eulogium*, iii, 405; Walker (2003), 182–3.

47

Parl. Rolls, viii, 408 [5]; *Eulogium*, iii, 405–7; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 440–8; Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii, 268–9.

48

Cal. Signet L., no. 370; *Proc. PC*, i, 264–5; *Foed.*, viii, 398; *Eulogium*, iii, 407–8; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 448–56, 806–10; Gascoigne, *Lib. Verit.*, 226; *Plumpton Correspondence*, ed. T. Stapleton (1839), p. xxv.

49

Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 60, 64; *Roy. Lett.*, ii, 62, 73–6; *Foed.*, viii, 400; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 409–10 [7–10]; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 456–8; *CPR 1405–8*, 68. Cf. Boardman (1996), 286–7; M. Brown (1998), 106–7.

50

Foed., viii, 399–400, 404, 414, 415–16; *CPR 1405–8*, 30, 47, 61, 66, 78; PRO 101/43/38 (3/35, 36); *Proc. PC*, i, 275–6; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 456, 460–2; Hardyng, *Chron.*, 363–4; *Eulogium*, iii, 408.

51

St Albans Chron., ii, 460, 472; Usk, *Chron.*, 214; Hardyng, *Chron.*, 364; Wyntoun, *Orig. Chron.*, vi, 409–10; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 347 [39], 409–10 [7–9]. Murdoch negotiations: *Foed.*, viii, 388; *Roy. Lett.*, ii, 59–61.

52

Normandy grant: Cochon, *Chron.*, 212–13; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 284–90. The revocation must have occurred in the last week of July, after Louis' return from Normandy (for his movements, see Jarry, 322). Council summons: *Rapport Arch. Dijon*, 105. Le Quesnoy: *Plancher, iii, no. 247. Troops: BN Coll. Bourgogne 58, fol. 113; AD Côte d'Or B11738; *Itin. Jean*, 350.

53

Charles VI: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 292, 392, 348; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 177; L. Mirot (1914 [2]), 346–7. Flight from Paris: *L. Mirot (1914 [3]), 397–9, 405–13; *Choix de pièces*, i, 269–71; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 137–9; *Itin. Jean*, 350, 351; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 292–6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 108–13; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 193–4; *Chronographia*, iii, 263.

54

*L. Mirot (1914 [3]), 396–7, 399–403; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 296–306; *Chronographia*, iii, 265–9; *Rapport Arch. Dijon*, 105; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 166–7; *L. Mirot (1914 [3]), 399–403.

55

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 350.

56

Prevenier (1961), 152 and n^5, 288 and n^5 (Flemish); Vaughan (1966), 16; *Rec. Ord. Pays-Bas*, iii, no. 5 (Four Members). Truces: AD Nord B535/15048; B11823/23496–8.

57

Rapport Arch. Dijon, 106–7 (official); BN Fr. 32510, fol. 342vo (smaller meeting); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 113–14 (captains). Ordinances: AN K55/35; *Choix de pièces*, i, 270.

58

*L. Mirot (1914 [3]), 399–403; BN Fr. 10237, fols 43, 46–47vo, 53–53vo.

59

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 310; *Choix de pièces*, i, 273–83; AN KK267, fols 118vo–120 (list of places to which Louis' manifestos sent); *L. Mirot (1914 [3]), 405–14; *Flammermont, 263–4.

60

Money: Coville (1932), 358–9; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 330 (with a different figure). Troops: *Chronographia*, iii, 270–1; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 120–1; *Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 776; *Choix de pièces*, i, 270; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 332. Armagnac and Albret: *Rapport Arch. Dijon*, 106; *Choix de pièces*, i, 270.

61

Choix de pièces, i, 270; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 167–8; *Chronographia*, iii, 271–3; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 121–3; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 312–16, 336.

62

Reinforcements: *Itin. Jean*, 350–1; *Rapport Arch. Dijon*, 105–6, 106; Chauvelays, 136–60; BN Fr. 32510, fols 342–3. Burgundian recruitment: AD Côte d'Or B11756/8 (4); AD Côte d'Or B1543, fols 64, 99vo, 102vo, 115vo, 127vo, 130, B1554, fol. 185. Defence: BN Coll. Bourgogne 58, fols 104, 108; *Journ. B. Paris*, 1–3; Cochon, *Chron.*, 214; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 306–8, 312, 332–6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 113–14, 123–4; *Chronographia*, iii, 273–4; 'Res gestae', 234; *L. Mirot (1914 [3]), 398 (ambassador); 'Geste des nobles', 111 ('common people').

63

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 330, 334–8, 342–4; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 168; *Rapport Arch. Dijon,* 106–7; *Journ. B. Paris*, 3; *L. Mirot (1914 [3]), 415–19; Pisan, 'Epistre'.

64

Finance: AD Côte d'Or B1543, fols 166vo, 182; B1547, fol. 196vo; B1560, fol. 272vo. Negotiations: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 344; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 168–9.

65

Gerson: AD Côte d'Or B1503, fol. 35vo; B1508, fol. 37vo; 1519, fol. 61vo; Gerson, *Oeuvres*, i, 109. John and University: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 112–13; *Rapport Arch. Dijon*, 107. Generally on University: Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 14, 33; Coville (1888), 115–19.

66

Gerson, *Oeuvres*, vii, 1137–85.

CHAPTER V

Gascony and Wales, 1405–1407

The summer campaign on the Gascon march went ahead regardless of the events in Paris. But the armies had to be manned and funded in the south with very little help from the royal treasury. In April 1405 locally recruited troops from Saintonge laid siege to Mortagne, the northernmost of the Anglo-Gascon strongholds on the right bank of the Gironde. Mortagne was a long-standing thorn in the side of the French, which had been taking an estimated 25,000 *écus* a year in *patis* from the surrounding country. The siege was a local initiative, organised by Jacques de Montbron, whose daughter-in-law claimed the place as a descendant of its former owners. Mortagne was a powerful fortress. A double line of walls, towers and ditches was defended by the formidable half-English dowager Margaret Stratton, the widow of the even more formidable Soudan de la Trau who had occupied the place in the 1370s. There was no prospect of relief. Once English plans to send an army by sea to Bordeaux had been abandoned the duchy had to fend for itself. A mere 160 men arrived from England with the newly appointed Mayor of Bordeaux, Sir Thomas Swinburne. By the time he reached Bordeaux Mortagne was already reaching the end of its resistance. French miners had undermined the walls. Their siege engines threw huge rocks into the castle, one of which crashed into the living quarters and killed Margaret Stratton's daughter. The place was finally abandoned by its garrison at the end of June after holding out for more than two months. The soldiers made off in boats across the Gironde at dawn, leaving it open to the enemy. Margaret was among the prisoners.[1]

The main French military effort in the region did not begin until July. The French advanced on the duchy from two directions. The Constable of France, Charles d'Albret, gathered his forces at Saint-Jean d'Angély at the end of June. On 6 July he laid siege to Chalais in Saintonge, the most significant fortress still in Anglo-Gascon hands north of the Gironde. Its Gascon captain Peyroat du Puch had appealed directly to Henry IV for help when the first rumours of an impending attack had reached him earlier in the year. There had been vague promises of assistance. But in the event he found that he was on his own. Henry did no more for Chalais than he had for

Mortagne. Some three weeks after Albret's arrival at Chalais, the French mounted a two-pronged attack on the Bordelais from the east. Bernard Count of Armagnac invaded the lower valley of the Garonne with a force of 1,000 men-at-arms and 300 crossbowmen, while the Count of Clermont simultaneously moved down the valley of the Dordogne with a second army comprising much of the military nobility of Languedoc. The defence in both valleys was the responsibility of the King of England's Seneschal of the Agenais, Nompar de Caumont. But his forces were weak and thinly spread and were swiftly overwhelmed. The pattern was the same everywhere. From the walls of remote fortresses small garrisons of hardened Gascon *routiers* resisted with ferocity for as long as they could, while the towns opened their gates at once rather than run the risk of a sack. In the course of a seven-week campaign the French overran all the places held by the Anglo-Gascons in the Agenais, eighteen castles and walled towns including the important strongholds of Port-Sainte-Marie, Tonneins and Aiguillon as well as the surviving Anglo-Gascon garrisons on the Dordogne at Castelnaud and Badefols. Caumont himself was captured and lost all of his own castles in the region.[2]

The ultimate objective of all three French commanders was Bordeaux. In September Clermont and Armagnac joined forces and their combined army advanced on the city. They occupied Langon, the last significant Anglo-Gascon town on the Garonne upstream of the city, apparently without difficulty.[3] At about the end of the month they appeared before the walls of Bordeaux and blockaded it from the landward side. Fortunately for the citizens a grain fleet had recently arrived from England and their city was therefore relatively well provisioned. Armagnac intended that the Constable's army in Saintonge should come south to join him outside the city. But the critical element of his plan was a Castilian galley fleet on which he depended to seal off the city from the Gironde and the sea. This proved to be his undoing.

Henry III of Castile had agreed in April to supply a fleet of war galleys for operations against the English in Gascony. But the galleys were based in the arsenal at Seville and his admirals were unable to prepare them or bring them round to the Bay of Biscay in time. Instead, rather late in the season, the Castilians sent a shrunken flotilla comprising just three galleys which they had available in the northern port of Santander. The commander of the troops and the effective leader of the expedition was the Castilian adventurer and royal favourite Pero Niño. Already at the age of twenty-five a veteran of the crusades against the Muslim kingdoms of Spain and North Africa, Pero Niño seems to have taken on the job

at his own expense as a personal speculation. ‘Everyone goes to the market with his own store of luck in the hope of profit,’ he told his companions; ‘thereafter he is at the mercy of the fates.’ The fates dealt a poor hand to Pero Niño. The galleys reached La Rochelle some time in July. After discussion with the Constable it was decided that since the Count of Armagnac had not yet opened his campaign they should fill in two months in plundering enterprises of their own. Pero Niño sailed for Brittany. There he fell in with another speculative war contractor, Louis of Orléans’ chamberlain Charles de Savoisy. Savoisy had had two large galleys fitted out at his own expense in Marseille. The two of them agreed on a joint raid on the coastal settlements of the west of England.

On 23 August the five galleys sailed together for Cornwall in search of profit. There they plundered St Ives and seized a number of merchant ships. They looted their cargoes and loaded them onto the two largest prizes, which they sent back to Harfleur. They sank the rest. It was their only substantial success. At St Ives the French and Castilians were forced to reboard their ships in a hurry as the English coast-guards concentrated around the town to confront them. At Plymouth they were driven off by artillery fire from the town before they could even make landfall. At Dartmouth and the Isle of Wight they landed briefly but the coast-guards appeared so quickly that they were obliged to reboard at once. At Portland it was the same story. At Southampton they were deterred by the sight of the bristling new towers and gates along the waterfront. Apart from St Ives it was only at Poole (which the Castilians knew as ‘the town of the corsair Harry Pay’) that they were able to do any substantial damage ashore. Poole was unwalled and most of the male population were away at sea. The invaders were therefore able to land with impunity and burn part of the town, killing a number of the defenders including Pay’s brother. However, the complete absence of any mention of the landing in the English chronicles or administrative records suggests that the Franco-Castilian campaign was far less damaging than previous operations of its kind. By early September the galleys were refitting at Harfleur. From here the three Castilian galleys returned to La Rochelle to resume their original mission.[4]

Pero Niño arrived at Talmont at the mouth of the Gironde towards the end of September. He had expected to find the Count of Armagnac there. In fact the Count was still several days’ march away. So the Castilians sailed into the waterway and landed in the Médoc, north of the city, on 26 September. They burned some villages and carried off some cattle. But while they were engaged in this operation their ships were attacked by armed merchantmen

from Bordeaux and driven off, leaving at least part of the raiding party stranded. At the same moment reports (in fact false) reached Pero Niño of an English sailing fleet in the Bay of Biscay bound for Bordeaux. Unwilling to be trapped in the Gironde, Pero Niño abruptly abandoned the campaign and returned to Harfleur. Shortly afterwards the Count of Armagnac arrived before the walls of Bordeaux. Finding no fleet to support him he resorted to bluff. He challenged the citizens to come out and fight. He must have expected them to do so, for no fewer than eighty new knights were dubbed in the French host in anticipation of the battle. But the defenders of Bordeaux had no reason to abandon the security of their walls. After just four days they offered Armagnac a large sum of money for a cease-fire, which he accepted. North of the Dordogne Charles d'Albret negotiated a similar cease-fire with the lord of Mussidan who commanded the Anglo-Gascon forces in his sector. The absence of a fleet made it pointless to continue. But that was not the only reason for the sudden halt to the campaign. Reports were arriving daily of the dramatic events occurring outside Paris. Louis of Orléans was pressing for reinforcements to confront the Duke of Burgundy. The Constable left as soon as he could for the north. At the beginning of October he arrived with his retinue in the capital.[5]

According to English reckonings the French offensive had resulted in the capture of ninety-six walled towns and castles. Of these the Count of Armagnac alone was responsible for about sixty. Some of these conquests, such as Mortagne on the Gironde, Port-Sainte-Marie by the confluence of the Lot and the Dordogne and Langon guarding the road to Bordeaux by the Garonne were strategically valuable acquisitions. Others, such as Chalais, which finally surrendered to the French after a siege of four months in November, housed predatory Anglo-Gascon garrisons whose removal was important to the inhabitants of the region. But the outcome was nonetheless a disappointment to the French leaders. Bordeaux had proved to be as unattainable as ever. As long as the English clung to this great city and its immediate hinterland they would be able to go on planting remote garrisons of *routiers* across the south-west as they had been doing since the 1340s.[6]

And so it was in 1405. Within days of the Count of Armagnac's withdrawal the fortress of Limeuil, standing over the confluence of the Dordogne and the Vézère seventy miles east of Bordeaux, was captured with the aid of defectors from its French garrison. It fell to Jean de Beaufort, the renegade son of the family which had held it in the French interest for more than three decades. He turned it into a base for lucrative *routier* operations in southern Périgord,

something which he could only do under English colours. He brought in a garrison of 200 men under Perrot de Fontans ('le Béarnais'), a notorious *routier* from Béarn who had terrorised the Limousin in the 1380s. The two of them now embarked on a new career of banditry together with a younger associate, Archambaud d'Abzac. They captured Carlux in the Dordogne valley in the new year. From here they took the remote but powerful thirteenth-century castle of Commarque together with its owner Pons de Beynac, the leading French nobleman of the Sarladais. By the following spring they were penetrating into Perrot's old hunting-grounds in Bas-Limousin (the modern department of the Corrèze). North of the Dordogne other *routier* bands advanced in the path of the retreating French troops. The town and castle of Brantôme on the Dronne in northern Périgord were surprised by the lord of Mussidan, leaving a small French garrison holding out in a tower of the fortified abbey. From here they were in a position to threaten the peace of five French provinces. Ramonet de Sort, another notable survivor from the *routier* wars of the late fourteenth century, began to expand his operations from his bases around Bergerac. Across the northern march of Gascony from the Garonne to the Charente the old Anglo-Gascon companies were re-forming, often under the same leaders who had fought the brigand wars of the 1380s.

Something of the expansive mood of the moment can be seen in the internal dissensions of the garrison of Fronsac, which was defended by a mixed garrison of English and Gascons under an English captain. The Gascons were indignant when the English insisted that they should stay put to defend the main approach to Libourne from the north, instead of planting new garrisons and exacting rich *patis* beyond the march. The English, they complained, were courageous fighters when fighting from stout stone walls, but never made real war, preferring the 'life of pleasure and delight' to be had in garrison service. Writing to Henry IV in the following spring the Archbishop of Bordeaux recounted the advances of the Gascon bands with enthusiasm. Everyone who understood war, he said, agreed that with reinforcements from England under a notable captain the King's position in the south-west could be entirely restored.[7]

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On 22 July 1405 the Marshal Jean de Rieux sailed from Brest for Wales. He was accompanied by three principal lieutenants: the Admiral of France Renaud de Trie; Jean de Hangest, recently released from captivity in Calais, who had for years been regarded

as the council's leading expert on English affairs; and that veteran of countless dogfights on the march of Calais, the one-eyed Robert 'Le Borgne' de la Heuse. They had 800 men-at-arms and 600 crossbowmen under their command together with some 1,200 unmounted infantry and an artillery train. The fleet comprised about 140 ships, including forty great carracks of Castile. It was the biggest seaborne expeditionary army which the French had ever successfully sent to sea against England. The lack of experience told. Shipping space was tight. With so many men and animals crammed into the cargo spaces it proved impossible to load enough fresh water, as a result of which most of the horses died on the passage. At the beginning of August the Franco-Castilian fleet arrived in the broad natural harbour of Milford Haven in Pembrokeshire. In spite of his recent reverses Owen Glendower still controlled most of Wales outside the surviving garrisoned enclaves of the English. A few weeks earlier he had presided over a second parliament of his supporters in the spectacular surroundings of the captured Edwardian castle of Harlech in north Wales. According to English informants his plan now was to organise the largest possible show of force with the aid of his French allies and then to propose a treaty to Henry IV from a position of strength. Glendower brought his followers to the shore of the Haven to welcome the French. There were 10,000 Welsh gathered there according to French estimates and the true number may well have been close to that. Jean de Rieux retained a number of French ships with him to support his operations along the coast. The rest returned to France with reports of an uncontested landing and a warm reception.[8]

Jean de Rieux's ultimate objective was to invade England. But before doing that he was obliged to help Glendower to consolidate his hold on south-west Wales and to secure the coastal region by which alone reinforcements and supplies could reach him from France. These operations produced mixed results. The combined French and Welsh forces attacked Haverfordwest and took the town but failed to capture the royal castle on its rocky outcrop above. There was a serious reverse at the coastal town of Tenby, then one of the largest and richest English boroughs of south Wales. Tenby was defended by an impressive circuit of thirteenth-century walls, much of which still survives, and by the old castle of the earls of Pembroke projecting into the sea at its southern extremity. The French constructed siege engines and laid siege to the place in the methodical fashion to which they were accustomed. But their Welsh allies fled when some thirty English ships appeared off the town under the command of Harry Pay and Sir Thomas Berkeley. Abandoned by their allies the French were forced to withdraw in

haste. As they left they burned their siege train and baggage park as well as part of their fleet, which was lying beached along the strand. Berkeley and Pay sailed on to Milford, where they captured fourteen more French ships lying at anchor in the harbour. This left Jean de Rieux and his companions with only a handful of ships to support their operations and eventually take them back to France.

The dismal opening of the campaign was partly retrieved at the end of August, when the allies regrouped and invaded the fertile valley of the Towy. They attacked Carmarthen, the most populous town of south Wales and the site of an important bridge and river port. The town, parts of which were unwalled, was occupied without difficulty and sacked. They then laid siege to the castle. The old fortress, standing on its rocky bluff on the bank of the river, had never been as strong as the more modern constructions on the coast. Its English garrison, theoretically the largest in the region, appears to have been much reduced by desertions. Within four days French sappers had undermined the walls. The garrison beat back the first assault. But they suffered heavy losses and were not inclined to face a second one. They surrendered in return for their lives. The ancient castle of Cardigan, administratively a satellite of Carmarthen, surrendered immediately afterwards.

Towards the end of August 1405 the French finally entered England. They marched west with their Welsh allies through the valleys of Brecknock and invaded Herefordshire. There was a brief engagement outside the walls of Hereford, where the Earl of Arundel had taken charge of the defence. A large English sortie from the town was driven back with heavy losses. The assault which followed claimed more English casualties. But the French had reloaded their artillery onto their remaining ships, and without it they concluded that Hereford could not be taken. So they pressed on into England, pausing just eight miles short of Worcester at Woodbury Hill.

Henry IV had reached Worcester on 22 August 1405. A large English army was already encamped outside the town when the Welsh and their French allies arrived. The two sides faced each other across the fields, each waiting for the other to make the first move. The stand-off lasted a week. Glendower might have had the critical encounter for which he had been hoping. But, calculating the odds, the Welsh leader decided not to risk defeat at the hands of the heavily armed English troops, even with French support. So he withdrew into Wales. The English King advanced after him as far as Hereford. Here he summoned more troops to join him to pursue Glendower and the French into the hills. The pursuit began in early September but it was a disaster. The weather broke just as the King

entered Glamorganshire. The rain cascaded down. The rivers swelled to torrents. The English baggage train was stuck in mud. Progress was painfully slow. By the end of the month the campaign had to be abandoned. The surviving English enclaves in south Wales had by now lost hope of effective help from England. Defying the King's council, the English of Pembrokeshire, the most densely colonised and castled region of Wales, decided to sue for terms. They bought a truce from Glendower in return for what amounted to *patis* of £200 in silver. It was a humiliating moment.[9]

Yet in spite of the inadequacy of the English response the French expedition to Wales had been a failure. Its only notable achievement, the capture of Carmarthen, did nothing to advance their objectives. The commanders and the men-at-arms were fed up. They had completed the service required by their indentures. They were experiencing serious problems in finding food, which grew worse as the autumn advanced. The principal captains had invested considerable sums in the expedition, which they had been unable to recoup from plunder during their brief foray into the western counties of England. Jean de Hangest was probably not the only captain serving in Wales who would have to sell land to meet his losses. Others, such as the Admiral Renaud de Trie, found their health broken by the long sea journey and the cold, wet Welsh climate. A visitor who saw him a few weeks later described him as 'old and ill, broken by fighting'. All of them wanted to return to France. In November 1405 they wound down their campaign. The men-at-arms embarked on the six remaining ships and sailed away. But the infantry and crossbowmen had to stay behind until a new fleet could be fitted out in France to rescue them. They were assigned winter quarters, where they remained until they were eventually taken off and brought home the following year at the expense of the Duke of Orléans. Even now their misfortunes were not over. The ships sent to fetch them had to fight their way past the ships of the western admiralty commanded by Berkeley and Pay. A third of them were lost.[10]

Charles VI's ministers responded to these misfortunes with the kind of soul-searching which had followed the equally expensive and fruitless expedition to Scotland in 1385. They had always had unrealistic expectations of intervention in Wales. They viewed it as a way into England. They understood very little about the Welsh war, which was essentially a defensive guerilla war designed to hold the Welsh uplands and harass English garrisons and the occasional field force to appear in the plains and valleys. Glendower's fighters were not suitable allies for an invasion of England through the open countryside of Herefordshire and Shropshire. However, the main

jolt to French expectations was political. They had entertained an altogether exaggerated idea of the scale of the internal opposition to Henry IV in England. They had expected to be received by the English as deliverers and it came as a shock when they were not. As the French government later admitted, they would have sent more assistance to Wales if only there had been some evidence of a 'firm and immutable' determination on the part of the English to rise up against their King. As it was, although they continued to declare France to be Glendower's ally and to proffer general expressions of goodwill, they sent him no more troops, supplies or money.

By the time that the last French troops left Wales, the tide was already turning against Owen Glendower. Anglesey and Flintshire, in the heart of territory traditionally loyal to him, were already in the course of pacification. In April 1406, Glendower suffered one of his worst defeats when more than a thousand of his supporters were killed in a single battle, including one of his sons. A month later another force operating in support of Glendower under the command of the Earl of Northumberland was wiped out by the levies of Cheshire and Shropshire. The Earl, like the French, decided that Glendower was no longer worth backing. Within days of his defeat he and Bardolf were bound for Brittany, probably on the same ships which brought home the residue of the French army.[11]

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In Paris decision-making was now practically paralysed by the disputes between the princes and the prolonged 'absences' of the King. The Duke of Burgundy had succeeded in imposing a nominal commitment to reform on his cousins in October, but the political community still looked to the Duke of Orléans for leadership. The Castilian galley captain Pero Niño, who passed several weeks in Paris at the beginning of 1406, found that to get his business done he still had to go to Louis. 'All the affairs of France were in his hands,' he recalled. Meanwhile John the Fearless hectored the cowed and resentful councillors on the subject of administrative reform, and they responded with sullen obstruction. Jean de Montaigu, the Master of the Royal Household, and his two brothers, both senior officers of the Chambre des Comptes, worked tirelessly behind the scenes to create a common front against him on the council. They engineered an alliance between the Queen and the Dukes of Berry and Orléans. A formal treaty between these potentates was sealed at the beginning of December 1405 in which they undertook to pursue a common position on all issues relating to the interests of the King. The Duke of Bourbon, the Count of Tancarville and Montaigu himself were all undeclared adherents to

this pact. Relations between the rival groups shortly reached breaking point. On 4 December John summoned the Constable Charles d'Albret and all the royal chamberlains to a meeting to discuss how to overcome the princes' resistance to his proposals. After four or five hours of deliberation he invited them to meet him again over dinner at the Hôtel de Bourgogne on the following day. The other princes and their allies held their own meeting at the Bastille, at the end of which they sent a message to the Constable and chamberlains directing them not to attend John's dinner. They did this, they said, 'in case people should think that he had some right to undertake the reform of the realm, and should imagine that [the princes] were about to join him in this enterprise'. John's fury knew no bounds. The Dukes of Berry and Orléans, fearing that he would attack them, had guards posted in their Parisian mansions and appeared at the next meeting of the council carrying weapons beneath their cloaks. 'My lord's business seems to be going badly,' wrote a Burgundian official to his colleagues at Dijon.[12]

A few days after this incident the Duke of Bourbon, who came closest to being neutral in these disputes, succeeded in broking an accommodation between the princes and restoring a measure of goodwill which persisted for several months. The terms are not recorded and may not have been reduced to writing. But they can be surmised from what subsequently happened. It seems to have been agreed to confer upon the Queen a permanent power to mediate between the rival cabals. At the same time Louis of Orléans made some concessions to John's desire for a recognised position at the heart of the French state and a measure of administrative reform, provided that his own interests were not prejudiced. At Christmas 1405 Charles VI began to recover his senses and it became possible for the first time in several months to transact important business. On 27 January 1406 the council, meeting in the King's presence, approved two new ordinances about the government of the kingdom during his 'absences'. The first substantially reproduced the abortive instrument which Philip the Bold had pressed on the confused King in April 1403. The power of government during the King's 'absences' was formally conferred on Isabelle of Bavaria, with the benefit of such advice as might be required from the four royal dukes of Berry, Bourbon, Orléans and Burgundy, the royal council or the officers of state. The second formally recognised the new Duke of Burgundy as having succeeded to the position in the French government previously occupied by his father and conferred on him a special role in the upbringing of the royal children. These ordinances, and especially the first, were destined to have a fateful influence on the politics of the following

years. They meant that any faction seeking to control the government would have to control the Queen. Isabelle, elevated to the position of president of what was in effect a council of regency but without any significant following of her own, would be forced into a succession of defensive alliances with whichever of the princes seemed at the time to be most powerful or least threatening.[13]

The flow of gifts and revenues into John's coffers was resumed, albeit on a modest scale and with frequent interruptions. In due course the council also addressed John's objections to his rival's position as Captain-General on the march of Calais. The appointment was transferred to him and he was able to put his own men into the key garrisons. At the end of January 1406 the first tentative steps were taken towards putting the Burgundian reform programme into effect. Official salaries were reduced, in some cases by as much as half. 'Extraordinary' salary supplements were curtailed or abolished. The number of financial and judicial officers was ordered to be drastically diminished. All pensions charged on the royal demesne in favour of members of the Parlement were revoked unless justified by at least twenty years' service. At the same time there appears to have been a notable reduction in the scale of grants to the Queen and the royal princes. The princes had reconciled themselves to these measures as the price of peace. But the civil service had not. The Parlement in particular fought a vigorous rearguard action, picking over the ordinances for defects of form or drafting, sending them back for revision and deferring registration as long as they could. Before long the jobbery resumed and the number of appointments recommenced its inexorable climb. By the spring of 1406 it was clear that the Duke of Burgundy's reform programme had run into the sand. Meanwhile the Dukes of Orléans and Burgundy played out their appointed roles, engaging in the traditional rituals of reconciliation, kissing, feasting together and wearing each other's emblems. The tension was never far from the surface. Pero Niño observed them at dinner in Paris. He thought that it was all pretence.[14]

Against this background the war received less attention from the politicians in Paris than it had formerly done. The fighting at sea had not gone France's way. Expensive ventures in Scotland and Wales had failed. Henry IV had survived every attack on his authority, and now seemed too secure to be dislodged. The whole question of war finance had become particularly difficult as a result of the princes' quarrels. None of them was willing to sacrifice his claims on the resources of the Crown. Without that the only way of funding large-scale operations against the English was to impose

another *taille*. This would be extremely unpopular and was certain to be exploited by the Duke of Burgundy to consolidate his political support among the populace. This prospect aroused real fear among his cousins. In the previous autumn the council had considered a scheme for an entirely new system of taxation involving a flat rate charge of 20 gold *écus* on every settlement in France which could not claim exemption on account of war damage or plague. Its authors thought that it would raise 18 million *écus*, net of collection costs, or more than six times the yield of the *aides, gabelle* and *tailles* combined. It was proposed to use nearly 13 million *écus* of this to fund a standing army of about 40,000 men and the rest on the royal household and the accumulation of a new treasury reserve. It is not clear who devised or supported this fantastic scheme, which would have been administratively unworkable and well beyond the resources of France even in better times. But it quickly foundered on the opposition of the princes and, apparently, of the King. No alternative proposal was ever substituted for it, and the basic features of the French tax system remained unchanged until the end of the eighteenth century.[15]

In the spring of 1406 the first signs emerged that the French government might be willing to negotiate with Henry IV on a broader basis than mere lip-service to the treaty made by his predecessor. Diplomatic contact with England was tentatively resumed after a hiatus of two years. There are good reasons for associating these moves with the Duke of Berry, but they must have been tolerated by Louis of Orléans. In February one of Henry IV's chamber knights, Sir Francis de Court, made a secret visit to Paris to explore the possibility of reinstating the truce until midsummer so as to allow the resumption of negotiations for a permanent peace. He was well received by the Dukes of Berry and Orléans. This was followed up in April, when Henry IV's half-brother Henry Beaufort Bishop of Winchester, a prominent English councillor Thomas Lord Camoys and the King's long-standing confidant John Norbury travelled to Leulinghem to meet a French embassy led by Jean de Montaigu Bishop of Chartres and Jean de Hangest. It was one of the few meetings at this level to have occurred since Henry's accession. Beaufort was authorised to propose a permanent peace and a marriage between the Prince of Wales and a daughter of the French King. The French said that they had no authority to agree a cease-fire and are said to have responded with 'caution' to the idea of a marriage alliance. But Beaufort was received with unwonted cordiality and showered with largesse. Neither of his proposals was dismissed out of hand. There appears to have been an agreement to reinstate the creaking procedures for awarding compensation for

breaches of the truce; and an understanding that more substantial issues would be discussed between the English council and the Duke of Berry. The Duke's confidant and councillor Casin de Sereinvilliers was in England in May.[16]

In July, the Earl of Northumberland and his companion Thomas Bardolf, having found their way from Wales to Brittany and from there to Flanders, appeared in Paris hoping to obtain French backing for a fresh rebellion in England. Northumberland was allowed to put his case to the French royal princes in person. He repudiated all personal responsibility for the deposition and death of Richard II. He denounced Henry IV with a passion that some, even in his audience, are said to have found excessive. He declared the Earl of March to be the true King of England and called for military and financial support to mount an invasion of England in support of his claims. The question was discussed at length over several sessions of the royal council. But they ultimately sent him away with nothing more than expensive gifts. The Welsh cleric Adam of Usk, who met Northumberland several times when he was in Paris, reported that the Duke of Orléans had been strongest in his opposition.[17]

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The prospect of a more cooperative relationship with England was shortly dashed. The main reason was the near-collapse of the English position in Gascony. During the spring of 1406 local French forces on the march of Gascony began the Sisyphean task of recapturing the places which had been so cheaply conquered by the Anglo-Gascon companies over the winter. In the larger scheme of things the strategic value of these places was questionable. But they were a source of fear and insecurity to the communities of the south-west, who could be bullied into providing the finance and most of the troops to recover them, without the need to tap the royal treasury in Paris. The main effort was directed to the recovery of Brantôme from the garrison installed there in November by the lord of Mussidan. Brantôme was a substantial walled town whose possession gave the Gascon companies a base from which to raid across the whole of the region north of the Dordogne. The place was under siege by the beginning of February 1406. By the end of March the Constable, the Counts of Armagnac, Clermont and Alençon, and the Seneschals of Saintonge, Poitou and Limousin were outside the walls with some 1,200 troops between them. The walls were battered by artillery until the garrison finally entered into an elaborate conditional surrender agreement at the beginning of April. This provided for a *journée* on 30 May. Unless an army of relief

appeared on that day ready to do battle outside the town on ground carefully agreed and marked out in advance, the garrison bound itself to surrender.

The men in Brantôme appealed to the council in Bordeaux to relieve them and everyone assumed that they would find a way of doing so. The French royal council even heard reports that the Prince of Wales in person was on his way from England. These reports frightened them into sending heavy reinforcements from the north. In fact no relief was on its way from England and Henry IV's officers in Bordeaux had no men to spare. The Gascon *routier* bands in the region did what they could to help their brothers-in-arms. Perrot le Béarnais and Archambaud d'Abzac collected a small force of some 300 men in the hope of surprising the besiegers. But they were wiped out by the French while they were still on their way and Archambaud was captured. On the appointed day a French army said to number nearly 5,000 men stood in line in front of the walls for four hours waiting to confront a relief force that never appeared. At the end of the day Brantôme opened its gates.[18]

These events had an electrifying effect on the balance of power in the south-west, which seems to have taken even the Constable by surprise. They put fear into the hearts of other Gascon captains of the region. Archambaud d'Abzac ended up by surrendering all his conquests and paying an enormous ransom to obtain his release. His garrisons at Carlux and Commarque agreed to abandon them for money. Ramonet de Sort, who was described in a French royal document of this time as having the entire region in his thrall, concluded like them that he could no longer hold out. He sold out of his principal stronghold in Quercy and entered into negotiations with the Count of Armagnac to hold the rest for the King of France. Jean de Limeuil submitted to Charles VI after Limeuil had been subjected to three days of mining and bombardment. In July 1406 the Constable marched through the Dordogne valley, sweeping up a succession of small Anglo-Gascon garrisons in his path, while the Seneschal of Limousin advanced on the newly founded Gascon garrisons of Bas-Limousin. He took them one after the other by assault or purchase, leaving a trail of corpses swinging from trees or floating in the rivers bound hand and foot. The Archbishop of Bordeaux's regular reports to Henry IV were brutally candid, as perhaps only a churchman and an Italian could afford to be. 'I have written to you so often and so forcefully about the state of your duchy', he wrote in June, 'that I no longer know how to say it clearly enough without repeating myself.' No one, said the Archbishop, any longer believed his promises of military support. 'You cannot defend this land with just words … Think about the

consequences of your inaction.'[19]

It took another crisis in the affairs of the duchy to show how vulnerable the English position was. At the beginning of July 1406 Raimond de Montaut lord of Mussidan died without a male heir. One of the last men living to have fought with the Black Prince at Nájera, Raimond had been a power in the Bordelais and western Périgord for nearly half a century. In addition to the fortress of Mussidan in Périgord he had also been lord of Blaye, a substantial walled town on the right bank of the Gironde. The council in Bordeaux was filled with foreboding. Raimond had left two daughters: Joan, who had recently married the French Seneschal of Saintonge John Harpeden; and Marie, the designated heiress of Mussidan and Blaye, a young unmarried woman whose choice of husband was likely to determine the ultimate allegiance of both places. Raimond's widow Margaret of Albret, who had custody of her daughter and assumed the administration of her domains, was a cousin of the Constable of France. She also occupied in her own right the important fortress of Vayres on the left bank of the Dordogne a short distance downstream of Libourne. On his deathbed Raimond had done what he could to ensure that his possessions would not fall into French hands. He had limited his wife's rights as far as he legally could. He had charged Marie to live and die in the allegiance of the King of England and to take no husband who would not undertake to do the same. But there was a limit to what Raimond could achieve from beyond the grave. The whole affair showed how dependent the English duchy was on the choices of a few hundred Gascon noblemen bound by complex links of marriage, kinship and alliance which cut across traditional political allegiances.

Margaret of Albret fled to Mussidan for safety. Within days she was besieged there by her cousin the Constable. Mussidan was a powerful garrisoned fortress. But within a week John Harpeden had brokered a deal between Margaret and the Constable. It was hard to say where military operations ended and family arrangements began. She abandoned Mussidan on terms that she would receive the income of the lordship for her life. So the most important Anglo-Gascon fortress in Périgord received a French garrison and passed permanently out of the duchy's control. Margaret was also pushed into recognising the Constable's title to Vayres, which they had disputed between them for many years, on terms that she would be allowed to remain in occupation, observing a scrupulous neutrality in the Anglo-French war. The Constable tried with 'much subtlety' but no success to persuade Margaret to marry Marie to his younger brother Louis, which would have put Blaye into French hands as

well. The widow could not wait to escape the Constable's clutches. As soon as she had reached Vayres she repudiated her agreement and brought in an Anglo-Gascon garrison from Bordeaux. But Margaret of Albret was not willing to serve the English Crown unconditionally as her late husband had done. She took the line of least resistance, fearing for the future, concerned for her daughter's inheritance and anxious to hedge her position with both sides.[20]

In this she resembled many, perhaps most prominent Gascons. Her kinsmen of the house of Grailly were perhaps the most significant trimmers of all. Now secure in the possession of Foix and Béarn, the main concern of Archambaud de Grailly Count of Foix was to preserve his extensive domains and numerous castles in the Bordelais, almost all of which were within the power of Henry IV's officers in Bordeaux. He informally split his interests between his sons. The eldest, John Viscount of Castelbon, who would eventually succeed him as Count of Foix, was an avid partisan of France who had made his own alliance with Louis of Orléans and took an active part in the Count of Clermont's campaign of 1404. He was endowed with the family's domains in Aragon. The second son, Gaston, was given effective control over the family domains in the Bordelais and eventually assumed the title of Captal de Buch. He told the authorities in Bordeaux that his political line would be guided by his father. In practice this meant that his position veered between benevolent neutrality and active support of the English cause. These ambiguous arrangements were no doubt expected to provide the family with assurance against any eventuality. As for the Count of Foix himself, he evaded the attempts of both sides to recruit his support. He maintained discreet contact with the English King's officers in Bordeaux. He assured Henry that he had not approved of his heir's decision to throw in his lot with the French, which is difficult to believe. As Archambaud said later that year, his true loyalty had always been to the King of England, but he would never say it in writing lest the document should fall into the hands of the French.[21]

Early in June 1406 the French commanders on the march met to consider what to do next. They were elated by the outcome of the siege of Brantôme and the evident signs of collapse among the Gascon *routier* garrisons. There had been no military response to their operations to date from either England or Bordeaux. The weakness of the enemy was palpable. It was not even clear that the English had the will to resist. The Constable and his colleagues believed that they were witnessing the first signs of the collapse of the English duchy of Guyenne. They were determined to build on their success by invading the heartlands of the English duchy. With

the harvest approaching it was the ideal season to put an army into the field. The critical factor was money. The local assemblies which had financed the campaign so far were unlikely to grant another tax so soon, even with the heavy-handed methods of persuasion employed by the Constable. A campaign in the Bordelais would probably have been beyond their financial capacity anyway. Albret reported to the council in Paris that after more than two years on the Gascon march, in which he had had to meet much of the cost of his retinue from his own resources, he could not go on without substantial funding from the King. He needed 45,000 or 50,000 francs urgently. With this he believed that he could conquer every walled place of the Bordelais and lay siege to Bordeaux itself in the current season. If he did not actually take Bordeaux he was sure that he could inflict serious damage on it. It would be a tragedy for France if this opportunity was allowed to pass.

The Constable's appeal made a considerable impression in Paris. Even the Duke of Berry, naturally averse to the risks of war and prominent among the peacemakers of the spring, gave it as his opinion that there were many Gascon noblemen who had written off the prospects of the English duchy and were ready to abandon their English allegiance as soon as a sufficiently powerful French army entered the region. The final expulsion of the English from south-western France was a great prize. On the other hand mounting a major campaign on the Gascon march would involve repudiating all of the recent diplomatic overtures to Henry IV. And the treasury could not raise 45,000 or 50,000 francs, which was in any event a considerable under-estimate, without imposing another *taille*. This would require the authority of the King who was 'absent'. It was also likely to provoke the hostility of the Duke of Burgundy and his supporters in the streets.[22]

At about the beginning of July 1406, when no answer had been received from Paris, the Counts of Clermont and Alençon were sent north to press for action in person. Arriving in the capital they found that the King had recovered his wits a few days earlier.[23] It took another three weeks to gather all the right people in the capital. In the last week of July a great council finally assembled in the King's presence in the Hôtel Saint-Pol. All of the royal princes, Berry, Bourbon, Orléans, Burgundy and Anjou, were present together with the King of Navarre. They were joined by the King's councillors and chamberlains and a mass of knights. The discussions extended into early August. At length the council decided to support the Constable's proposal. It was agreed that the Duke of Orléans would command a major offensive on the Gironde in the autumn, while the Duke of Berry would lead a second army down the

Garonne valley from Languedoc. Even the Duke of Burgundy accepted the case for attacking Bordeaux while its defenders were weak. The main bones of contention were the perennial question of finance and John's fear that operations against Bordeaux, in addition to glorifying his rival, would strip resources from the march of Calais. Reports from the northern front seemed to lend force to his fears. The English, who could see the sky darkening above their heads, had declared their intention of reinforcing Calais and had made a start on replenishing its stores. Their garrison had recently become more aggressive. An English force from Guînes had laid siege to the small fort of Balinghem at the southern edge of the pale, which was used by the French as an observation post. Exaggerated reports of these developments circulated in Paris, where it was believed that the English King's son Thomas of Lancaster was embarking a great army to invade France through Picardy. The Duke of Burgundy made adroit use of these rumours. He pressed for a simultaneous invasion of the pale of Calais under his own command. It was his price for agreeing to the offensive on the Gascon march, and the council eventually agreed to pay it. Jean Jouvenel, whose father was one of the Duke of Orléans' advisers, thought that their main reason was to keep the peace between the rival princes and avoid the 'grumbles and gripes' which had paralysed its work in the past. Some of them may also have reflected that the northern campaign would be a useful feint to divert English attention and resources away from the south-west.

The decision to mount a simultaneous campaign in the north greatly aggravated the problem of finance. The Chambre des Comptes prepared a report on the state of the government's finances, which showed that the combined demesne revenues and tax receipts of the Crown only just covered its ordinary expenses. This included the *aides* which had been more than enough under Charles V to pay for the reconquest of much of western France. This was the measure of the pre-emption of royal revenues by the princes and the civil service. It meant that another *taille* would be required. The King was outraged and called for an investigation. But no investigation of this long-standing problem was likely to resolve the immediate issue. The Duke of Burgundy objected to another *taille* 'with all the force he could muster'. He thought that the money should be raised in 'other ways'. By this he meant savings on the obese budget of the administration. Others objected to this attempt to revive the Burgundian programme of administrative reform which they had thought had been successfully buried. The outcome was a compromise. It was decided to pay for the double campaign by a mixture of economies and fresh taxes. On 28 July, in a rare

show of unison, the whole council approved a great administrative ordinance, the second attempt in a year to prune the public administration and achieve large savings in the government's budget. There were to be drastic reductions in the personnel of the royal household, the Chambre des Comptes and the mints. The 'extraordinary' supplements were to be abolished (again) and some other perquisites done away with. Severe restrictions were imposed on new grants, especially those made at the expense of the royal demesne. In addition there was to be a 'little *taille*' of 200,000 francs, to be divided equally between the campaign treasurers of the Dukes of Orléans and Burgundy. An ordinance was approved imposing this tax, in which it was tendentiously claimed that France was about to be invaded by Thomas of Lancaster and that the money was urgently required for its defence.[24]

The Duke of Burgundy left Paris on 10 August to begin his preparations. A few days later the compromise was undone by the Parlement. The judges declared the ordinance to be 'contrary to the King's honour' and declined to register it. They would have been badly affected by the reforms, and particularly by the abolition of salary supplements. Their objections were no doubt fortified by the official element on the council and possibly by some of the princes. The result was to create a gap in the government's war budget. On 16 September the *taille* was doubled to 400,000 francs. The lion's share of the increased *taille*, 250,000 francs, was to be used to fund Louis of Orléans' campaign. A fresh ordinance was published, even more tendentious than the first, which declared by way of explanation that a second English army was now poised to invade France. John the Fearless, who was at Dijon, had not been consulted. He was furious. He felt that he had been hoodwinked. He returned to Paris at the end of September to try to have the new ordinance cancelled. But by the time he arrived it was too late. Arrangements to farm out the increased tax were already in hand and the Duke of Orléans had left for the Gascon march.[25]

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In spite of the tone of alarm in the two French ordinances imposing the *taille* there were in fact no English armies gathering by the shore or poised to invade France. Thomas of Lancaster had indeed been appointed to command an army but it was intended for Bordeaux, not Calais, and was cancelled for want of funds before a single soldier had been recruited. Henry IV's financial situation in the summer and autumn of 1406 was as bad as it had ever been. The double subsidy of November 1404 had been rigorously reserved for war expenses under the supervision of the special war treasurers

appointed by Parliament, but it was entirely consumed by the cost of suppressing the second Percy rebellion, conducting operations in Wales and keeping the sea. All of it had been spent or anticipated. The customs, which was the principal remaining source of funds, had been diverted to meeting the cost of the King's household and clearing the most pressing of the government's mountain of accumulated debts. This left Henry without any means of prosecuting the war apart from windfalls and borrowing. Nowhere were the consequences of Henry's penury more obvious than in Gascony and Calais, the two fronts threatened by the French government's current plans. No funds had been transferred to Gascony since Henry's accession and no troops serving there had been paid from the English Exchequer since April 1405. In Calais the reservation of customs revenues to the payment of the garrison had collapsed under the pressure of the King's debts and had been effectively suspended since March 1406, while direct payments from the Exchequer were reduced to a trickle. As a result the men's arrears of wages had mounted steeply over the summer.[26]

These problems were aggravated by Henry's declining health. Before his accession Henry had been a fit, athletic man, a famous horseman and jouster. But as King he was oppressed by the physical burden of government. In the summer of 1405, as he was riding north from York in pursuit of the rebellious Earl of Northumberland, he was struck by a mysterious illness characterised by severe physical debility and disfiguring pustules, which disabled him for several days and recurred at irregular intervals for the rest of his life. The most plausible diagnosis is that it was a form of psoriasis, a chronic recurrent skin condition sometimes associated with high levels of stress. Contemporaries, however, called it 'leprosy'. Very little was known at the time about leprosy. But it was generally regarded as a mark of sin and may well have been so regarded by Henry himself. The combination of physical incapacity and unwillingness to be seen in public made it practically impossible for Henry to govern in person for long periods. In April 1406, while the King was at Windsor, he suffered another attack. Unable to ride, he was brought to London by barge at the end of the month and shut himself away in the mansion of the Bishop of Durham for the next three months, communicating with his council by letter. On 22 May he nominated a new council and delegated to it most of the day-to-day business of government. He could not, he said, devote as much attention to business as he would have wished.[27]

For much of this time Parliament was in session at Westminster. The Parliament which opened on 1 March 1406 was the longest of the entire middle ages, partly because of the many adjournments

occasioned by the King's state of health. It was also among the most fractious. The main business as far as the government was concerned was the grant of fresh taxes in the face of the most serious threat from France for many years. There was plenty to remind the Commons of the reality of the threat. The opening had had to be postponed when Charles de Savoisy blockaded the Thames with a squadron from Harfleur and captured a number of valuable merchant ships. A delegation arrived from Gascony, led by the principal territorial magnate of the Médoc, to impress on the Commons the parlous condition of the duchy. Nevertheless the proceedings were dominated from the start by the same complaints about inefficiency, extravagance and corruption in government which had preoccupied nearly every Parliament since 1401. In some ways these complaints echoed the very similar issues that were being debated at the same time in Paris. The Speaker of the Commons was Sir John Tiptoft, a knight of Henry's chamber, probably still in his twenties and then on the threshold of a famous career as a soldier, diplomat and administrator. The Commons' position was summed up in his first message to the King after three weeks of deliberation in which Henry personally had come in for a good deal of criticism. The Commons, said Tiptoft, wanted 'good government in abundance'. By this they meant by councillors approved by themselves with duties clearly laid down and of sufficient stature to stand up to the King, especially in the matter of grants and finance.

On 24 May 1406, two days after the King had nominated his new council, Tiptoft delivered a wide-ranging attack on the conduct of government over the past five years and especially its conduct of military affairs. Much of Ireland had been lost. Gascony was on the edge of destruction. Inordinate amounts had been spent on the defence of the Scottish march and yet the inhabitants of the north were 'utterly destroyed and annihilated'. The captains of fortresses in the pale of Calais were absentees. The war in Wales was going better but the men serving there were unpaid and ruined. The burden of coastal defence, another relatively successful part of the government's activities, had become intolerable for the local communities that had to bear it and the inland counties who were required to find archers and armed men at a moment's notice. All of this, said Tiptoft, was due to bad government. Over the following month Tiptoft broadened his attack to cover the whole machinery of government. The King was cheated by his revenue collectors, by his treasurers at Calais and in Ireland, by the marshals who took his musters and allowed numbers to be made up with 'sons of bondsmen who do not even know how to ride'. His household

consisted ‘mostly of rascals’ and its cost was excessive. His finances were wrecked by improvident grants of land, castles and annuities. These imprecations were followed by repeated complaints in the course of the sessions about the number of foreigners in the household of the King and his French Queen, marking the reappearance of the xenophobia of fourteenth-century Parliaments. It culminated in a call for the expulsion of forty-three named individuals, mostly minor courtiers or harmless menial servants including a cook and two laundry-women.[28]

Some of the Commons’ criticisms of the government were attributable to their perennial tendency to underestimate the cost of defence and overestimate the King’s traditional sources of revenue, although as an insider Tiptoft should have known better. But much of his diatribe was plausible and some of it was plainly justified. There was a continual smell of fraud around the administration of Calais. The captains of the town and the fortresses of the pale were generally absentee war contractors who drew their pay but performed their duties through deputies. Henry’s half-brother John Beaufort Earl of Somerset was Captain of Calais and his son Thomas of Lancaster was nominally in command at Guînes, but Somerset was rarely there and Thomas never was. The victualler of Calais, who handled large sums in cash, had been imprisoned in the Fleet prison in 1403 while a special audit was conducted of his books, although presumably nothing was found since he was ultimately reinstated. Similar allegations of embezzlement were made against the King’s financial officers in Gascony. The Constable of Bordeaux, Sir William Farringdon, who was arrested in 1402 in the middle of a council meeting, was almost certainly innocent. But the case of Sir Edmund Thorpe, the Mayor of Bordeaux, who was dismissed in the same year after ‘diverses et orribles maters’ were alleged against him, was rather murkier. These were almost universal features of army commissariats and pay offices until modern times, but in a close and angry assembly such things acquired a resonance out of all proportion to their real importance. The allegations against Henry’s conduct of his own finances were more fundamental. The level of grants under Henry IV was high. Many of them were grants of annuities secured by assignments of revenues in the hands of collectors that starved the Exchequer of cash. Henry’s household was heavily indebted, its finances mismanaged and its accounting chaotic. Its cost was not only excessive by historic standards, but was taking a rapidly increasing proportion of payments from the Exchequer.[29]

The uncomfortable reality was that the government’s revenues, however well managed and carefully spent, were simply not large

enough to fund a major war in either Wales or France let alone both. The Commons were blinded to this truth by their obsession with the conservation of the royal demesne and the delusion that the King could live on his own resources without the need for taxation. Certainly they can have been under no illusions about the scale of the government's financial problems. When they asked that money should be found urgently for the keeping of the seas they received the laconic answer *'Il n'y a pas de quoi'* ('There isn't any'), and yet the sum required was only £4,000. The councillors whom the King had nominated in May responded by declaring to a man that they would resign unless proper financial provision was made for the 'good governance' that was being demanded of them. The problem was that the Commons had little hard information and distrusted the men about the King. Characteristically negotiations for the grant of a subsidy broke down in June over the Commons' demand to examine the books. On one of the rare occasions that he emerged from the purdah of Durham house Henry dug in his heels and refused. 'Kings were not wont to render accounts,' he said. His officials added that they had no idea how to render accounts and the tax collectors claimed to have no vouchers or receipts. Faced with this impasse the Commons determined to make use of the imminent perils to which Tiptoft had drawn attention to force a solution. So when, on 19 June, Parliament was adjourned until the autumn to allow the harvest to be brought in and the lords and Commons to 'take their pleasure and relax' over the summer, no tax had been granted apart from a modest and temporary increase in tunnage and poundage dues.[30]

Naked in the face of the looming threat from France, on the day after Parliament adjourned Henry summoned a great council to advise him what to do. But when it met on 8 July the King was not there. He had left London the day before and set out on a slow progress around the shrines and pilgrimage sites of East Anglia and the Midlands, atoning for his sins and praying for his recovery. The day-to-day government of the realm was abandoned to his council. They were paralysed for lack of funds and leadership. The government machine was kept going with hastily arranged loans. £12,000 had been borrowed by the end of the month. Most of this sum was found by the London draper John Hende, who had become the Crown's leading financier, and by Richard Whittington the current mayor of London, 'of merchandy that lodestar and chief chosen flower', who had been lending to the Crown for twenty years. Hende traded to Gascony and Whittington was a major wool wholesaler with important commercial interests in Calais. These men were astute businessmen with a great deal of their own at

stake. But if they hoped for an energetic response to the crisis they were destined to be disappointed. The loans enabled the council to reinforce Calais. But Gascony was abandoned to its fate.[31]

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French preparations for the assault on the Gironde got under way in the second week of September 1406, within a few days of the final decisions in Paris. The Constable Charles d'Albret established his headquarters in the massive twelfth-century keep of Pons, where the high road from Poitiers and Tours crossed the River Seugne. His preparation for the coming campaign was methodical and conceived on an impressive scale. French troops, stripped from garrisons across the south-west and pressed into service by the provincial seneschals, were moving down the river valleys into Saintonge. By the end of the month, the Constable had about 1,500 locally recruited men-at arms and 500 crossbowmen under his command. Victuals and other stores were being collected throughout the region. Thirty armed ships were lying in the bay of La Rochelle, including ten oared barges and galleys under the command of Charles de Savoisy, by now France's indispensable naval contractor. All of this was beginning to eat up money at a time when the *taille* had not even begin to come in. The Constable demanded another hearth tax from the long-suffering population of Saintonge, which had already granted one earlier in the year and another the year before. Coming on top of all the usual difficulties associated with the presence of large numbers of undisciplined soldiers, these demands were declared to be intolerable and were rejected. The Seneschal of Saintonge blustered. The Duke of Orléans ordered it to be collected by force. The Constable, faced by wage demands from the crews of his ships, seized large sums of money and plate from the citizens and churches of La Rochelle.

Characteristically, much of our information about these things comes from the records of English and Gascon espionage. English spies in Paris reported to the Captain of Calais on the movements of the Duke of Orléans and the progress of his preparations. The city of Bordeaux and other front-line towns organised a pervasive intelligence network and received frequent, generally accurate reports of French plans. They sent spies to Poitiers, Saintes and Angoulême to report on the movements of French troops. They interrogated prisoners of war. Their agents at Pons listened into the discussions of the French Constable's council, suborned a Franciscan friar employed by the Duke of Orléans as a courier, and rifled the baggage of a messenger carrying letters between the leaders of the French army. The Seneschal of Guyenne, Gaillard de Durfort, was

receiving reports from a well-placed source in the Duke of Orléans' camp so secret that the jurats of Bordeaux had to be sworn to secrecy before he would discuss their contents.[32]

The Duke of Orléans had left Paris for Saint-Denis on 16 September to receive the *Oriflamme*, the traditional battle flag of the French monarchy. He began his march south two days later. But the Constable's long-drawn-out travails delayed his arrival in Saintonge by nearly a month. On 15 October 1406 the Duke finally raised his standard at Saint-Jean d'Angély, an ancient monastic town on the River Boutonne in northern Saintonge. It was the largest and most distinguished royal army to take the field since 1388 and the first to be commanded by a royal prince. Louis' cavalry contingent was plausibly estimated at 5,000 men-at-arms, representing a total strength with pages, armed servants, bowmen, infantry and artillerymen of at least twice that number. Five hundred pioneers went ahead of the columns clearing the paths and smoothing the way for carts and artillery pieces. The nobility thronged to share the place of honour at Louis' side. With him marched the Constable, the Marshal Jean de Rieux, the new Admiral of France Pierre ('Clignet') de Bréban, and the calculating Jean II de Montaigu. The heads of most of the famous noble houses of the north were there, including the Counts of Clermont, Alençon, La Marche and Vendôme; the seneschals of all the march provinces north of the Dordogne; and the Count of Armagnac representing, along with the Constable, the two principal noble houses of the south-western march. John Duke of Brittany did not appear in person but he sent ships to reinforce the fleet already gathered at La Rochelle and troops to join Louis on the Gironde. The old Count of Foix hedged his bets as he had always done. His son the Viscount of Castelbon joined the Duke of Orléans with a company of 400 men, but he sent a private assurance to the jurats of Bordeaux that the family's castles in the Bordelais would continue to be held for the King of England. The jurats doubted whether these assurances would be worth much if the military tide turned against them. They were probably right.[33]

The French plan was to lay siege to the cluster of English strongholds on the north bank of the Dordogne, where the river flows into the Gironde: the walled towns of Bourg, Libourne and Saint-Émilion and the fortress of Fronsac. They then proposed to divide their forces, with the greater part of the army crossing the Dordogne and approaching Bordeaux from the east, while the rest landed from the sea in the northern Médoc and marched on the city by the north. The Duke of Orléans sent his heralds to Libourne with a summons to surrender and a threat to treat them as traitors if they did not comply. They owed no allegiance, he said, to their regicide

King. He, Orléans, alone had the strength to offer them real security. Similar summonses went to Bourg and Saint-Émilion.

It was originally intended to bypass Blaye, the only other English walled town on the east side of the Gironde, in spite of its strategic position at the narrowest point of the Gironde. Orléans and the Constable had high hopes of securing the place without a fight.[34] Blaye stood on an escarpment by the Gironde, dominated at its northern end by the vast enclosure of the old twelfth-century castle. Marie de Montaut, who controlled the castle, was in an unenviable position, young and without experience of politics or war. Much of her kin was fighting with the French. Her chief counsellor was Bertrand de Castres, abbot of the suburban monastery of St Roman, a well-known French sympathiser whom King Henry's officers in Bordeaux had never trusted. It was later discovered that he had accepted 2,000 *écus* from the French to deliver up the town. Marie's own views were more equivocal, although her personality hardly emerges from the oppressive presence of the men around her. Until well into September it was still believed that Thomas of Lancaster was on his way to Gascony with an army of relief. But once it became known that the expedition had been cancelled she ducked and weaved, like many others in her position, to avoid committing herself to either side until the outcome was clear. She declined to swear an oath of allegiance to Henry IV or to impose one on the citizens of the town and refused to rule out negotiations with the French commanders. Under strong pressure from the King's officers in Bordeaux she agreed to have the Abbot of St Roman arrested but he remained at liberty. The town had its own garrison, manned by troops sent across the Gironde from Bordeaux. Their commander was Bertrand de Montferrand, a prominent baron of the Bordelais and a member of the Seneschal's council. But the town was indefensible without the castle, and Bertrand never succeeded in gaining access to the castle. Marie, having first agreed to admit his men, then closed the gates in their faces. Instead she turned for protection to the Count of Foix. He was only too pleased to turn the situation to his advantage. He sent her a protector in the form of Jeannot de Grailly. He was a rough soldier of fortune and a bastard son of the Black Prince's companion the famous Jean III de Grailly Captal de Buch. But the Count of Foix's protection came at a price. Marie was obliged to promise to take the Count's third son, Archambaud, as her husband. Jeannot and Archambaud were both men of ambiguous loyalties, like the Count himself. The situation seemed sufficiently promising for the Duke of Orléans to divert his army from the road to Bourg.[35]

On 21 October 1406 the French army encamped outside Blaye as

the bells were ringing for vespers. The Duke of Orléans arrived two days later and established his headquarters in the monastery of St Roman. Here he opened negotiations with the defenders. Marie de Montaut was represented by her councillors led by Jeannot de Grailly and the Abbot of St Roman, and the town by its Anglo-Gascon captain. The Seneschal, alarmed by the prospect of Blaye opening its gates without a fight, resolved to go there and take control of the situation. On the morning of 23 October he crossed the water with an escort of eighty men-at-arms and a force of crossbowmen and English archers, entering the town by the water gate to the cheers of the inhabitants. He remained there for the next five days but achieved nothing. It was clear that Jeannot was in control. His troops turned the Seneschal away at the castle gate when he tried to enter. The two men had a brief and ill-tempered meeting in the town. The Seneschal told him that he had come to defend Blaye against the enemy, but first there would have to be an end to the negotiations which were inconsistent with the honour of all those involved. Once that had happened they would have all the armed protection they needed. He demanded to see Marie herself. Jeannot replied that he was not interested in the Seneschal's opinions and walked out. The discussions with the French continued.

On 28 October when a deal with the French was almost done, the Seneschal finally obtained an interview with Marie de Montaut. It was held in the town, since she would not allow him into the castle unless he came with a single companion and no escort. The Seneschal suggested that she should cede Blaye to the King in exchange for the much more valuable fortress of Blanquefort on the opposite side of the Gironde. She refused to consider this without Jeannot's consent. The Seneschal demanded an oath of allegiance. She replied that her council had advised against it. He threatened to burn down the town in reprisal. Finally, turning to Jeannot, the Seneschal formally forbade him to continue the negotiations. Jeannot, who almost certainly had substantial assets in the Bordelais, seems to have complied. But the negotiations were completed by Marie herself. That afternoon she left the castle by a postern gate. She was met by her brother-in-law John Harpeden, accompanied by the Count of Armagnac. One of them took her up on the crupper of his horse and rode off to the Duke of Orléans' headquarters. The Seneschal made for the waterfront and fled to Bordeaux for fear of being trapped in the town.

At the abbey of St Roman Marie sealed a treaty with the Duke of Orléans. It was a somewhat unusual conditional surrender agreement. Marie agreed to deliver up both town and castle to the

Count of Foix for the duration of the campaign and Jeannot was to hold it on his behalf. In the event that Louis succeeded in taking Bourg, Blaye would submit to Charles VI. In the meantime neither side was to be admitted within the walls. Marie de Montaut confirmed her agreement to marry Archambaud de Grailly, who would hold Blaye as a fief of France. The French leaders had no doubt that all this would come to pass. The Count of Armagnac told one of the Seneschal's squires that the English duchy was finished. His assessment was shared by others on both sides. Writing to Henry IV just ten days earlier, the Archbishop had told him that no one could resist an army as powerful as Louis'. 'As I have often told your Majesty, if the French prosecute their campaign as they have begun it there will be nothing left of your domains here unless proper reinforcements arrive from England.' On 30 October the Duke of Orléans resumed his march on Bourg.[36]

Bourg was situated on a rocky spur on the north bank of the Dordogne at its confluence with the Garonne. The place was of great strategic importance, for its possessor was in a position to control the traffic of both rivers. But it was not naturally strong. It was a classic *bastide* town refounded by Edward I of England, a rectangle of ancient walls dating from the late thirteenth century and enclosing a grid of streets. It was a royal town, not a seigneurial town like Blaye. It was also closely dependent economically on Bordeaux. Its inhabitants were determined to resist. The defence was jointly organised by the Seneschal's council and the municipality of Bordeaux, which were virtually fused into a single body during the crisis. The city imposed additional taxes on its inhabitants and borrowed heavily on its credit, which was considerably better than the government's. It paid the wages of the garrison of Bourg. It hired mercenaries. It took prominent *routier* companies into its service and commissioned ships and barges. It requisitioned large quantities of grain from English merchants, bread from the city's bakers and wine from the Archbishop's cellars to refill the stores of Bourg and other garrisoned fortresses. The Seneschal, who remained in control of the military dispositions, made skilful use of the city's position at the centre of a network of waterways. Most of the available troops and equipment had been stripped from the outlying garrisons and concentrated in Bordeaux, whence they could be moved from place to place by boat as they were required. Almost all of them were assigned to the defence of Bourg. They were carried into the town by three large ships on the third day of the siege. Bertrand de Montferrand took charge of operations. He had a professional garrison of 120 men-at-arms and 80 crossbowmen and several hundred armed townsmen under his

command. There was also a large cannon and four smaller ones taken from the fortifications of Bordeaux, complete with their gun crews and a stock of gunpowder.[37]

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At the time that the Duke of Orléans' army arrived outside Bourg, preparations for the attack on Calais had been in progress for two months. It was a far more formidable undertaking than the siege of the Gironde towns. Calais was as close to being impregnable as any European fortress of the period. It was a substantial town protected by a powerful circuit of modern walls and ditches and by marshes which surrounded it on the landward side. A ring of five outlying forts guarded every approach, pushing the border of the English pale out for ten miles into the hinterland. Along the shore a line of dykes held back the sea, but great sluice gates at Oye and Newenham Bridge allowed the whole plain to be flooded and made impassable in a matter of hours. The ditches beneath the town walls were fed by the sea and could not be diverted or drained, making an assault exceptionally difficult, while the soft ground meant that there were very few places within range where a besieger could set up siege engines or cannon. The growing strength of the fixed defences had enabled the English to reduce the size of the garrison over the years but it remained a formidable force with a nominal strength in 1406 of 500 professional soldiers in addition to artillerymen and craftsmen and another 275 troops distributed among the outlying forts. Separated by just twenty miles of sea from the Kent coast and linked to the outlying forts by a dense network of waterways, the defences of Calais were relatively easy to reinforce and resupply. When in the course of October the English council learned from spies in Paris about the Duke of Burgundy's plans, the garrison was more than doubled by the despatch of 400 men-at-arms and 600 archers from over the Channel, bringing its total strength to nearly 2,000 men. Henry IV, who returned to Westminster apparently recovered in the middle of October, even declared that he would take command of the place himself, the first of many impulsive declarations of the kind which he would make in the last years of his life, only to relapse into torpor and indecision when the time came to act on them.[38]

The Duke of Burgundy had set up his campaign headquarters in the rambling buildings of the abbey of St Bertin at Saint-Omer. Saint-Omer was a walled town on the march of Flanders some twenty-five miles from Calais which stood at the hub of the region's road and river networks. For the past six weeks it had been a hive of activity as John's officials had set about the vast logistical

preparations required for an attack on one of the most powerfully defended towns of Europe. These preparations, which are unusually well recorded, give some idea of the scale of effort required to attack a major fortress in the early fifteenth century. The marshals had assembled an army of 3,800 men-at-arms recruited in Artois, Picardy and Burgundy, 1,800 bowmen including 500 Genoese crossbowmen, 1,000 pikemen, 3,500 pioneers, pavisers and labourers and at least 49 professional gunners. With the mass of armed servants who fought with their masters but did not appear on the muster strength, there must have been least 10,000 combatants. A vast inventory of stores had been assembled. John's purveyors had bought equipment on an impressive scale from the ironfounders and armourers of Paris and Bruges at a cost of more than 64,000 *livres* and had scoured northern France and the Low Countries for more. By early November they had 230 arbalests (giant crossbows mounted on fixed stands) and 10,000 large bolts to arm them. There were 100 spare longbows and 6,200 arrows, 200,000 crossbow quarrels, 20,000 spiked caltrops to impede cavalry charges and 1,200 of the great 'pavois' or shields behind which the crossbowmen rearmed their weapons. There were 300 ladders and 1,000 battleaxes for the assault parties; 4 mobile forges, 300 sacks of coal and 200 lanterns for the camp workshops; 4 portable flour mills and 2,000 panniers for the victuallers; several dozen carts and nearly 200 river boats for the supply network; 2,350 spades for the pioneers. The Duke's artillery park at Saint-Omer marked the real beginning of John's enthusiasm for gunpowder artillery, which was to become a hallmark of his campaign methods. It eventually contained 25 trebuchets and 120 cannon, including at least one great iron bombard weighing 2,000 pounds, among the largest then available, together with 3,000 cannonballs of dressed stone and nearly 12 tons of gunpowder. In the nearby forest of Beaulo (modern Éperlecques) 32,000 trees had been felled, depleting the woodland for 40 years to come. In the clearings of the forest 100 carpenters laboured under armed guard to build 7 great stone-throwing trebuchets and 22 artillery shelters while another 610 carpenters busied themselves with the construction of field fortifications including breastworks, a siege tower and two dismantlable forts.[39]

The Duke of Burgundy himself had been at Saint-Omer since the end of October 1406. By 7 November everything was ready. The equipment was loaded onto the boats and wagons. The men had been paid for the next two weeks. John announced his intention of marching on Calais the following morning after Mass. There was then an unaccountable delay, followed on the 12th by the

announcement that the campaign was cancelled. The news caused general astonishment. The most reliable explanation is given by John's Treasurer, Jean Chousat, who was with him in Saint-Omer and wrote an account of events to his colleagues in Dijon a few days later. According to Chousat, as John's army was about to depart, a royal councillor, Colard de Calleville, arrived from Paris with a letter forbidding him to advance beyond Saint-Omer. 'The maintenance of this army', it said, 'would damage the interests of the realm.' Similar letters were directly addressed to the principal royal officers serving in John's host instructing them to withdraw. These letters were drawn up in the King's name, but they did not emanate from the King, who had suffered a relapse earlier in the month. The decision appears to have been made by the Duke of Berry and the Orléanist majority on the royal council. John believed that it was instigated by Louis of Orléans himself and he may well have been right about this.

The truth was that the treasury could not fund two simultaneous campaigns on this scale. The whole of Louis' fleet and much of his army had been in being since the second half of September and was consuming money at a rate of 100,000 francs a month. Contrary to his expectations the towns of the Gironde had not opened their gates on his approach. Some of the great Gascon families were calculating their interests but none had yet rushed to his standard. It was obvious that Louis would have to extend his campaign into the winter if he was to reach Bordeaux. The whole proceeds of the *taille* would be needed to support the effort. Those councillors who had never regarded the northern campaign as more than a feint no doubt reflected that it had served its purpose anyway. John offered to subsidise the campaign from his own pocket by paying the wages of 2,000 combatants, about a fifth of the army, for the first two or three months. But Calleville, supported by the eight royal officers serving in the army, insisted that the order had to be obeyed. John was angry and humiliated. He had committed his reputation to the campaign and borrowed more than 60,000 francs to defray the initial expenses. He declared his intention of resuming the campaign against Calais in March and had the siege train carefully stored at Saint-Omer, where it would serve as a valuable arsenal for prosecuting the civil wars of the following years.[40]

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On the Gironde the Duke of Orléans was encountering mounting difficulties. His siege engines hurled great rocks at the walls of Bourg and did a great deal of damage. But the defenders held out. They repaired the breaches and fought from the top of the debris. A

succession of assaults was mounted against the walls. They tenaciously fought all of them back. Mines were dug under the towers. Countermines were dug beneath them. Overshadowing everything else was the problem of supply. The size of Louis' army reflected the status of its commander rather than the operational requirements of besieging a small place like Bourg. Its numbers were equivalent to the population of a substantial town. Rooted to the spot, the army exhausted the available food supplies over a progressively increasing distance as the siege continued. The campaign had started too late in the year for the soldiers to take the new harvest, which was safely locked up in walled towns and castles. These problems were aggravated by the weather. The winter was exceptionally cold and it rained incessantly. As Christmas approached the rain turned to sleet and hail and the wind blew it in the soldiers' faces. Their tents were waterlogged. Men waded knee-deep in mud. Food stocks rotted away. Fodder was in short supply and the streams were filled with mud, causing pack animals to die in large numbers. Basic sanitation failed completely. Shortly dysentery, the great enemy of siege operations throughout history, began to take hold in the French camp and human casualties mounted. By the end of the year disease and desertion were taking a heavy toll. Morale collapsed. The war treasurers began to run out of money. The luxurious existence which was still being enjoyed in Louis' own enclosure began to arouse resentment. Rumours circulated among the soldiers that he had gambled away the money raised for their wages. Sensing their enemies' discomfiture the Gascons in the town redoubled their efforts, battering the French encampment with artillery fire and stone-throwers, picking off men with arrows and crossbow bolts and launching sorties from the gates. On the Gascon march the consensus was that the tide had turned. The trimmers were beginning to return to their old allegiance. In the middle of December the Count of Foix arrived at his castle of Cadillac on the Garonne for the marriage of his son Archambaud to Marie de Montaut. The bride failed to appear.[41]

The French commanders at Bourg had been counting on the ships gathered at La Rochelle to keep the army supplied and to complete the encirclement of the town. The operations of the fleet were directed by the newly appointed Admiral of France, Clignet de Bréban. He was not well-regarded: an obscure and low-born individual enriched by the munificence of the Duke of Orléans according to the snobbish chronicler of Saint-Denis; a bombastic and bootlicking mediocrity according to another hostile voice. Bréban's misfortune was that the annual wine fleet from England had arrived at Bordeaux at the end of October, some twenty large

ships, many of which would have been armed for the dangerous passage past Brittany and across the Bay of Biscay. Together with the ships and barges already at Bordeaux the Seneschal disposed of some fifty merchantmen moored in the Garonne off the city in addition to a small number of oared barges. These vessels enabled the men of Bordeaux to maintain control of the waterways around their city throughout the siege. They patrolled the Gironde downstream as far as Talmont and the Dordogne upstream as far as Castillon, effectively cutting off riverborne supplies to the French army at Bourg from both directions. A large flotilla of armed vessels from Bordeaux was moored off the flats of Bec d'Ambès opposite the town under the personal command of the Seneschal, who had established himself in temporary headquarters nearby.

In December, as conditions were becoming desperate in the French camp, the Duke of Orléans ordered Bréban's fleet to fight their way through, something which they had so far shrunk from attempting. Eighteen French ships laden with supplies sailed from La Rochelle a few days before Christmas. In Bordeaux the English wine fleet was laden and ready to leave. They rapidly discharged their cargoes, took on men-at-arms and waited for the French victualling fleet. On 23 December the French ships reached the harbour of Talmont near the head of the Gironde and took on 300 soldiers. Then they proceeded up the waterway under cover of a thick mist. As they passed the village of Saint-Julien, where long sandbanks narrow the channel, they were confronted by twenty ships of Bordeaux, Bayonne and England under the command of the Gascon nobleman Bernard de Lesparre. There was a ferocious fight in the mist and failing light, which lasted some two hours. Several ships were captured and recaptured, some more than once. At the end of the day the surviving French ships were forced to retreat. In all 567 Frenchmen had been killed, including 20 knights. Another 120 knights and squires were captured. The Anglo-Gascons lost 52 men killed or captured in this fight. The retreating French ships were pursued along the waterway, where they suffered further losses. Bernard de Lesparre took two of the captured French ships to Bourg and set fire to them in midstream to advertise his triumph to the Duke of Orléans. A subsequent judicial inquiry in England attributed most of the credit to Bernard and the Gascons. The leading English captains, it was found, had held back until it was clear which way the battle was going, as a result of which they were deprived of their share of the prizes. Shortly afterwards Clignet de Bréban and Charles de Savoisy arrived in Louis of Orléans' camp with the captain of La Rochelle to review the situation. There could be no question of another attempt to run the gauntlet of the

Gironde. Yet without one there was no prospect of feeding the army.[42]

The Duke of Orléans was mortified. For a time he refused to recognise defeat. He wrote to the council in Paris calling for more funds. Great things would happen, he said, as soon as his men were paid. He wrote to the Republic of Venice and no doubt to others asking for the services of a military engineer. He must have hoped to extend the campaign through to the spring. But the proceeds of the *taille* were by now exhausted and the treasury in Paris was empty. On about 11 January 1407 Louis was finally persuaded that the army could not go on. His representatives approached the defenders and asked for a temporary cease-fire to allow negotiations to take place. After some hesitation this was agreed. Renaud lord of Pons, France's long-standing truce commissioner on the northern march of Gascony, tried to bargain with Bertrand de Montferrand for an honourable way out. But Bertrand knew that he had won. He had no interest in saving Louis' face and declined to make any agreement. On the 14th Louis gave up. At dawn he broke up his camp and laid off his army.[43]

The news resounded all across the south-west. The Count of Foix told Jeannot de Grailly to surrender Blaye to the English King's officers. Marie de Montaut repudiated the fiancé whom he had imposed on her and in due course married a Gascon of impeccably loyalist credentials approved by the Seneschal. The Anglo-Gascon companies resumed their raiding across the march. The lord of Limeuil readmitted the Anglo-Gascons to his fortresses on the Dordogne and the Vézère. Archambaud d'Abzac recovered possession of Castelnaud at the edge of the Sarladais. A string of new garrisons appeared like mushrooms after raids along the river valleys. In April 1407 there was a long conference between Gascon and French officials in the small *bastide* town of Cadillac, which marked the effective limit of English administration in the Garonne valley. The outcome was a series of local cease-fire agreements with the lord of Albret, his brother the lord of Sainte-Bazeille, the Count of Armagnac and the lord of Pons, together covering most of the march of Gascony on both sides of the Dordogne. The most serious military threat to the duchy since 1377 had failed through a combination of misjudgement, hubris and ill-fortune on the Duke's side and skilful improvisation on the part of Gaillard de Durfort and the city of Bordeaux on the other. Louis of Orléans' high rank, the status of his fellow commanders and the size of their army made the humiliation hard to live down. In Paris the acerbic clerk of the Parlement, who was in the habit of noting his views in the margin of his registers, was unimpressed by the sufferings of the French

army. He dismissed the whole enterprise as a 'joy-ride' ('*entreprise de revel*') which had brought nothing but failure and expense.[44]

The failure of the double campaign left a poisonous legacy in Paris. A month after the forced break-up of his own army the Duke of Burgundy arrived in the capital with an intimidating retinue of 3,000 mounted men at his back and confronted his enemies at an ill-tempered meeting of the council in the presence of the King, then enjoying an interval of sanity. The Duke of Orléans was not there but the Duke of Anjou, who had personally intervened to stop the *taille* in Anjou and Maine being paid to the war treasurers at Saint-Omer, got the rough end of John's tongue. A few days after this meeting the King relapsed once more into incoherence and all substantial business came to a halt. John left for Flanders towards the end of January 1407, a few days before Louis of Orléans returned to the capital from the Gironde.[45]

Once he had resumed the reigns of power Louis set about ensuring that his rival would never again be in a position to dictate terms to the council as he had done the previous August. In April 1407, when Charles was once more able to attend to business, his brother set about reorganising the council's membership. On 28 April, at a session attended by the King, the Dauphin and all the royal princes apart from the Duke of Burgundy, a new ordinance was approved. The number of councillors was halved. Twenty-six named individuals were appointed to the reduced body in addition to the royal princes and the officers of state. Eleven reliable allies of the Duke of Burgundy were removed. This left only two men who could be counted on to represent John's interests on the new council, whereas twenty of the named councillors were publicly identified with the Duke of Orléans. On the following day a similar revolution occurred in the financial departments. The number of treasurers and *généraux-conseillers des finances* (who controlled the collection of the *aides*) was reduced. A clean sweep was made of the Duke of Burgundy's protégés. John returned to the capital a week after these decisions were made but found that it was too late to do anything about them. The new council was in place. The King was once more 'absent'.[46]

John felt the impact of the change immediately. He had recently presented his account to the King. He was owed very large sums: 189,666 *livres* in arrears which had been due to his father at the time of his death and another 157,925 *livres* for the cost of the abortive campaign against Calais and the maintenance of the French garrisons of the northern march. These enormous debts were acknowledged and payment was ostensibly secured on the *aides* of five dioceses of Picardy and Champagne. But none of them was

paid. In addition his pensions from the treasury, his annual subsidy for the maintenance of the castle of Sluys and his right to the proceeds of the *aides* collected in his domains, all of which had been confirmed two years before, were stopped. The flow of 'extraordinary' grants, already reduced to a trickle, dried up entirely. In the long run these measures would have bankrupted the Burgundian state, as Louis and his allies must have understood and may have intended. Louis himself on the other hand appears to have received his pensions and *aides* without interruption and continued to procure generous royal grants in his own favour. Among John's circle it was believed that the Duke of Orléans' next move would be to have the duchy of Guyenne, which nominally belonged to the Dauphin, transferred to himself. By the end of May 1407 John was back in Flanders contemplating murder.[47]

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In England the failure of both wings of the French offensive was followed by the worst financial crisis of Henry IV's reign. On 22 December 1406 Parliament was dissolved after nine months of intermittent sessions. The King was finally granted the subsidy for which his ministers had been negotiating from the outset. But it was modest, a single tenth and fifteenth. Even that, according to the chronicler Thomas Walsingham, was only agreed after the King lost his temper and threatened to proceed against the Commons by force. It also came at a heavy political cost. Henry was obliged to nominate yet another new council, composed of 'persons pleasing to God and agreeable to his people'. This body was very different from the traditional group of officers of state sitting with a fluctuating body of household knights, officials, clerks and other comparatively minor figures dependent on royal favour. It was dominated by three men: Archbishop Arundel, an outstanding administrator who became Chancellor in January 1407; the King's half-brother, Henry Beaufort Bishop of Winchester; and the twenty-year-old Prince of Wales, Henry of Monmouth. The other members included the Duke of York, three bishops and a group of lay councillors most of whom were prominent noblemen. These men were intended to serve as an executive body governing more or less independently of the ailing King. He was required 'in all cases to trust their advice and govern in accordance with it'. The councillors had to swear an oath in Parliament to conduct their business in accordance with a comprehensive set of ordinances. These were designed to prevent them from governing in their own interest, the accusation which had commonly been levelled at the governments of Edward III's dotage a generation before, and to force on them measures to

address the Commons' long-standing grievances about the conduct of the public finances and the extravagant level of the King's household expenditure.

The arrangement marked a major shift of power within the English government. Henry IV passed most of 1407 in travelling gently from shrine to shrine. Occasionally he intervened in current issues, but his interventions rarely disturbed the ordinary course of business. From time to time he declared his intention of fighting in person, at Calais, in Gascony or in Wales, but nothing came of any of these projects. Henry never again fought in the lists or led his army to war and took little active part in politics for the next five years. That is not to say that he was a cipher. He continued to perform the dignified parts of his office, receiving ambassadors and presiding in Parliament and at great councils. He was consulted about major issues and made his views known. But he largely withdrew from the day-to-day business of government. Archbishop Arundel remained his closest political confidant and acted in effect as his deputy, faithfully reflecting his views and giving effect to his wishes.[48]

The new councillors resolved at the time of their appointment to retire to 'some suitable place' after the Christmas and New Year festivities to consider how the high expectations of the Commons might be met. Their deliberations were interrupted by a mutiny of the Calais garrison, an unpleasant reminder of the scale of the problems before them. The garrison had received little or no money for about nine months. On 17 January 1407 a petition from the men, endorsed by the lieutenant-governor Sir Richard Aston, recorded that the stores were empty and the garrison was living in 'outrageous poverty and wretchedness'. The document was written in courtly language, presumably Aston's, but there was no mistaking the desperation of its authors. At Westminster it was taken very seriously, especially as the Duke of Burgundy was still expected to renew his attempt on Calais in the spring. On 24 January the council gathered in the chapter house of Westminster Abbey and resolved to make £6,000 available to the Treasurer of Calais for wages and another £1,000 for victuals. It was less than the men were owed, and the council recorded that it might be necessary to increase it. This turned out to be a grave miscalculation. When they received the news, probably at the beginning of February, the soldiers rampaged through the town and seized the stock held by the wool merchants of the Calais staple. They threatened to sell it at whatever price it would fetch unless they were paid. The King reacted with characteristic fury. According to one account, which may be apocryphal, he summoned the representatives of the Staple

Company and demanded immediate loans to clear the arrears. ‘You have got gold and gold is what I want,’ he is reported to have said, ‘Where is it?’

After Easter a great council met in London in the utmost secrecy to consider what to do. It quickly became clear to the assembled magnates that submission was the only option. The government cleared all of the garrison’s arrears up to 30 May 1407 at a cost of some £20,000. It also had to compensate the merchants for their losses by relieving them from export duties for a limited period, and to restore the system of reserving customs receipts in priority to the Treasurer of Calais. The payments were funded by a heavy programme of borrowing, much of it from the Staple Company and individual wool merchants like Whittington and the Albertini bank of Florence. The commitment of so much revenue to Calais forced the government to find economies elsewhere. Proposals to reinforce Gascony were abandoned. A planned campaign by the King in Wales was cancelled. Other creditors of the Crown found their claims deferred, in some cases for long periods.[49]

In hindsight this can be seen as the final crisis of Henry’s feckless years. The Commons’ ordinances and the shock of the Calais mutiny forced the government into a long overdue overhaul of its finances. Over the next two years the accounts of Calais were put in order, the King’s receipts were brought more or less into line with his expenditure and bad debts were almost eliminated. Sir John Tiptoft, who as Speaker had had the task of conveying the Commons’ criticisms of the King’s household finances, was appointed as Steward of the household to sort them out. He reduced household expenditure by more than a fifth and brought borrowing more or less under control. Although the practice of assigning revenues at source continued, the volume of dishonoured tallies, which had been a serious problem in the first part of the reign, fell to quite modest levels in the second. It seems likely, although it cannot be proved, that there was also a substantial fall in the level of grants. At the same time the procedures for authorising and recording expenditure were tightened up. Some elementary budgeting was introduced and an order of priorities established for settling the King’s more urgent liabilities. All of this marked a considerable improvement on the hand-to-mouth methods previously in use.[50]

The new regime in England was fortunate in the moment that it came to power. Most of the internal and external threats which had disabled Henry IV’s government in the first seven years of his reign had begun to subside. William Serle, who had trained and manipulated the pseudo-Richard in Scotland, had run out of money and abandoned the pretence in the spring of 1404. He appeared

unexpectedly at Berwick to ask the captain, an old friend, for money to escape to France. He was arrested and made a full confession before being paraded through England to a barbarous public execution in London. Thomas Ward continued to be supported by the Duke of Albany in Scotland until his death, and the myth of the pseudo-Richard continued to be deployed by malcontents. But according to Thomas Walsingham no one in England took him seriously any more. The chief of the malcontents, Henry Percy Earl of Northumberland, had been refused official French support but he found a few volunteers to accompany him back to Northumberland by sea in about September 1406. From there he made his way to Scotland. In February 1408 he made a final attempt to raise the north against the King. Accompanied by Bardolf and Lewis Byford, the renegade Bishop of Bangor, he made his way south to the Yorkshire town of Thirsk where he raised his banner and issued a proclamation calling on the people of England to come to his aid. On 19 February 1408 the small rebel army was dispersed without difficulty by the Sheriff of Yorkshire at Bramham Moor, a short distance south of Wetherby. Northumberland himself was killed. His head was hacked off on the field and sent to London to be impaled on London Bridge. It was the last rebellion of Henry's reign.[51]

Scotland, more or less quiescent since the defeat at Humbleton Hill, was paralysed by an even worse misfortune. In March 1406 Robert III had resolved to send his only surviving son, the twelve-year-old James, to France. Ostensibly he was going there to complete his education. In fact he was almost certainly being sent away for his own safety, since James's survival was all that stood between Robert's ambitious brother the Duke of Albany and the throne of Scotland. James boarded a merchant ship, the *Maryenknyght* of Danzig, off North Berwick accompanied by his tutor and a small suite. On 14 March the *Maryenknyght* was boarded off Flamborough Head by English privateers from Great Yarmouth. The seizure of the ship was without doubt a breach of the truce. But Henry IV was not going to be stopped by legal niceties. He restored the ship and its cargo and most of the prisoners but not the heir of Scotland. James was lodged in the Tower of London. 'I know some French,' said Henry, 'They could have sent the young man to me.' The news of James's capture was brought to the Scottish King at dinner in the hall of Rothesay castle. 'At which', says the chronicler, 'his spirit failed, his strength departed, his face grew pale and for grief he ate no more.' Robert died a few days later on 4 April 1406 at the age of sixty-nine. The captive prince became King of Scotland. For the second time in a century a Scottish king was held captive in an English prison. He was destined to remain there for

eighteen years. Albany was formally nominated as Governor of Scotland, an office that he had in practice exercised for years. One of his first acts was to renew the old alliance with France. But it was an empty gesture now. The English government's possession of Albany's son Murdoch, his nephew James I and the Earl of Douglas made it practically impossible for the Scots to contemplate aggressive action against England.[52]

In Wales the year 1406 had marked the turning of the tide after six years in which Glendower and his followers had come close to destroying the fabric of English government in the principality. In April Prince Henry had been appointed as his father's lieutenant throughout Wales and the marches with viceregal powers. By this time the English had already reinforced Caernarvon castle in the Menai Straits and completed the reoccupation of the Isle of Anglesey. Two thousand men from Anglesey submitted to the King's officers at Beaumaris in November. Most of Flintshire in the north, Glamorgan and Gower in the south and Cardiganshire in the west had submitted by the end of the year. The Welsh rebellion persisted for another three years. Glendower himself was still capable of spectacular military feats like the relief of Aberystwyth in the autumn of 1407. But by this time only the western highlands of Caernarvonshire, Merionethshire and northern Cardiganshire and the fortresses of Harlech and Aberystwyth were still holding out for him. Within a year both fortresses had fallen and English rule was being re-established throughout west Wales. Edmund Mortimer died in the siege of Harlech, and most of Glendower's family were captured when the place fell. As for Glendower himself, he took to the hills and became a fugitive. His last recorded adventure should probably be dated to the year 1409. It was a brief and disastrous raid on Welshpool which resulted in the execution of most of his surviving lieutenants.[53]

Protected by the truces agreed after the Duke of Orléans' withdrawal from Bourg, the Gascon march fell quiet. The only significant military operation against the English in south-western France was the siege of Lourdes. The French had constructed *bastides* in front of the Pyrenean fortress over the winter of 1405–6 and embarked upon the long process of starving the place out. In about February 1407 the French seneschals of Toulouse and Carcassonne had begun a close siege with some of the troops recently returned from the siege of Bourg. With no prospect of assistance from Bordeaux, Lourdes was doomed. The garrison shortly began to suffer serious privations and desertions. Jean de Béarn, who passed the whole siege in his mansion in Bordeaux, refused to allow the garrison to surrender. Nonetheless on 31 July

1407, when they were down to their last casks of mead and water, his son, who was in command of the defence, entered into a conditional surrender agreement with the besiegers. He agreed to deliver Lourdes up in return for a free passage for the garrison and the right to carry off his father's accumulated pile of booty plus a cash payment to be fixed by arbitration. The chosen arbitrators, the King of Navarre and the Viscount of Castelbon, were both loyal partisans of France but also kinsmen of Jean de Béarn. This highly unusual arrangement resulted in the payment to the garrison of 32,500 *écus* over a number of months plus another 7,050 *écus* to its captain for the remaining stores and equipment. The communities of Languedoc had to find these sums on top of the 100,000 *livres* or so spent on the siege. It was one of the most expensive *videments* to be negotiated with an Anglo-Gascon garrison for many years. Lourdes opened its gates to the French in about March 1408. Its garrison had for years been a serious problem for the population of Bigorre and for merchants and travellers using the western passes of the Pyrenees. But by the time of its surrender the value of Lourdes to the English was purely symbolic. It contributed nothing to the defence or the revenues of the duchy. Its fall was, however, symbolic in another sense that perhaps could not have been foreseen. It was the last significant military operation against English interests in the south-west for a decade. Even before the victories of Henry V confidence that the English duchy would survive began to win back the trimmers and bolster political support for the government in Bordeaux.[54]

In November 1406, as the siege of Bourg was just beginning, Charles VI had issued from Paris a grandiloquent letter drafted by one of the finest classical Latinists in France, which was probably intended for distribution among the other monarchs of Europe. The French King reviewed the disappointing history of French attempts to support Henry IV's internal enemies. He expressed his amazement at the passivity with which the English nation had stood by in 1399 while their king was deposed and then supinely submitted to the tyrannical government of his murderer.[55] Yet at the time this letter was written the French government was already abandoning its long-standing refusal to recognise Henry IV as King of England or negotiate with his ministers on any other basis than the practically defunct treaty with Richard II. To some extent this was due to the growing preoccupation of the French princes with their internal disputes. But it also sprang from a more realistic appraisal of the strategic realities. They had signally failed to dislodge the new dynasty in Guyenne and they had found no way of intervening effectively in the British Isles.

The sea was the only theatre in which the French had been able to carry on a sustained campaign against England itself. But with the growing efficiency of the English coast-guard system hit-and-run raids against coastal settlements, which had provided such easy spoils in the fourteenth century, had became more and more hazardous. Fixed defences had been built along the south coast of England, notably at Southampton and Dartmouth. Information about concentrations of armed ships in French ports was constantly being relayed to Calais by ambassadors, travellers and spies. Through the summer months squadrons of requisitioned ships stuffed with men-at-arms and archers cruised in the Channel and the North Sea under the command of the admirals or their lieutenants. Along the shore watchmen, beacons and messengers provided early warning of the approach of enemy ships and spread the news of landings, bringing powerful land and seaborne forces quickly to the spot. It was practically impossible to intercept the raiders at sea or prevent them from landing. But the raiders were extremely vulnerable during the laborious and time-consuming business of climbing fully armed out of the ships, wading ashore and then getting back in again, often under the fire of enemy archers. Anchored close inshore or hauled up on the beach, the ships ran the risk of being trapped by far stronger naval forces as soon as the news of their whereabouts spread.

In 1405 Jean de Rieux passed some three months ashore in Wales but lost most of his ships and had difficulty getting back to France. Charles de Savoisy and Pero Niño had everywhere been forced to re-embark their men almost as soon as they had landed, as a result of which they did no serious damage except at St Ives and Poole. The following year was almost completely barren. After overwintering in the Seine their squadron of galleys and oared barges, now eight strong, cruised off the English coast for five months in the summer of 1406. Thirty years later their deeds were proclaimed by Pero Niño's standard-bearer as a marvel of courage and skill in *El Victorial,* a minor classic of chivalric literature. But it was in reality a tale of frustration and failure. Their solitary success was a raid on Jersey, where the defenders were less alert, which was mounted in conjunction with privateers from Saint-Malo. It earned a total of 8,000 francs in *patis* divided between all the participants, not much of a return for so much effort and expense. 'I have scoured the whole coast of Cornwall and part of the North Sea coast as well,' the Castilian captain told his men as they made for home, 'and I find the inhabitants everywhere on the watch and ready to assemble in defence of their country. No landing can now be attempted and no foothold held without a very large fleet and a

great army.'

The French never developed any remotely comparable system for defending their own coastline, which suffered severe damage year after year from English raiders. As early as January 1404 the French royal council assessed the damage done by English coastal raids at more than a millions florins. It rose steeply in the following years.[56]

Commerce raiding against merchant shipping at sea was more difficult to prevent, but in a war of attack and reprisal the French were always likely to come off worst. They do not appear to have instituted any convoy system, as the English government did on the route to Bordeaux from 1403 and across the North Sea to Dordrecht and Middelburg by 1406. Moreover, they had fewer and smaller merchant ships. According to the sea captains summoned to advise Henry IV's council in December 1403 there were 260 ocean-going ships large enough to fight at sea available in the ports of England, not counting Welsh or Irish vessels or those currently employed in supplying the garrisons of the north, which may have added perhaps forty more. No comparable record exists for France but with its shorter coastline and lesser dependence on long-haul sea trade the number is likely to have been smaller. French ships, moreover, rarely exceeded 60 tons burden, whereas the tonnages recorded by English requisitioning officers suggest that a significant proportion of their ocean-going ships were larger than that and that ships of over 100 tons burden were quite common.[57]

It is impossible to draw up a balance sheet of war damage but a mass of anecdotal evidence confirms that the French suffered a great deal more by the war at sea than the English did. A more sensitive measure of the economic damage than the declamations of tax collectors and chroniclers is provided by the records of local taxes on shipping and trade. At Rouen, one of the principal ports of western France with major import trades in fish, salt, wine and raw wool, the situation during the worst phase of the maritime war, between 1403 and 1406, was catastrophic. The yield of the tax levied on goods brought into the town fell progressively. Most of the decline is likely to be accounted for by the fall-off in goods coming in by sea. The number of ships discharged in the port sank to just twenty-one in the year 1405–6 from a normal level of about 150. The number of entries granted to Flemish merchants visiting the town fell to zero. The city's textile workshops, starved of the English wool on which they had traditionally depended, were obliged to find their supplies in Scotland and have them carried overland from Flanders at greatly increased cost. The disruption of the Biscay trade routes by English privateering seriously reduced the traffic in salt from the Bay of Bourgneuf, on which Rouen like much of western

France depended, and pushed up prices to unheard-of levels. In 1405 three Parisian wholesalers complained that of the sixteen cargoes of salt which they had consigned by sea to Rouen that year, nine had been captured or sunk at sea. Rouen's misfortunes are exceptional only in being relatively well documented. Fragmentary survivals suggest a similar pattern at Dieppe, Caen and other Channel ports. At Harfleur the town's assessment to the *aides* had to be reduced by 20 per cent in 1404 owing to war damage. Spectacular incidents, like William Wilford's capture of more than thirty French ships off Finistère and Belle-Île in October 1403 and Harry Pay's capture of ninety-five ships laden with iron, salt, wine and olive oil as they lay anchored off the Breton coast early in 1407, significantly depleted the French merchant marine and inflicted terrible losses on merchants across northern France where the cargoes were destined.[58]

For many Frenchmen the attacks on their shipping and coastal settlements provoked demands for full-scale war against England. It was in 1406 that Jean de Montreuil, an ageing diplomatic secretary in the royal chancery, began his career as a war propagandist, inaugurating a long and fertile literary tradition. Jean, a classic product of the Collège de Navarre, was an elegant and pungent Latinist. He had travelled in England and Scotland and read a great deal of history. He associated the coastal raids with the English *chevauchées* in France in the mid-fourteenth century which had caused so much pointless destruction. The English, he thought, were a violent, cruel and deceitful race, incapable of living at peace with their neighbours or sticking to an agreement. Negotiation with such people was pointless. Only force would confine them within their island. 'I love all who hate the English and hate all who love them.'[59] These sentiments probably represented the views of his patron Louis of Orléans as well as his own. But by the end of 1406 Louis' war policy had been largely discredited. Wiser heads remembered the failure of the three attempted invasions of England in the 1380s and the fate of the French expeditionary forces in Scotland and Wales. There was strong pressure in France for an accommodation with England at sea, especially from the two major maritime provinces of Flanders and Brittany.

The French government had by now finally accepted the principle of Flemish neutrality. When the royal council resolved in August 1406 that the Duke of Burgundy should lay siege to Calais, it was agreed that he would do it as Duke of Burgundy and Count of Artois but not as Count of Flanders. Accordingly he made a public declaration that no warlike acts would be committed against the English on behalf of the county of Flanders. Nor were they. John

recruited no troops in Flanders for his campaign and there is no evidence that he made any use of Flemish ships. The council renewed his authority to negotiate with England on behalf of his Flemish subjects. Remarkably, a fresh conference between his ambassadors and the commissioners of Henry IV opened in Calais on 15 October at the very time when troops were massing at Saint-Omer for a siege of the town. Another opened on 8 November as the army was about to march.

On 30 November, shortly after the Burgundian campaign had been unexpectedly called off, the diplomats reached agreement. It was embodied in two documents. One, the 'public' instrument, was a commercial truce for a year. The parties agreed upon a general safe-conduct for merchants of Flanders and England in either territory and a cessation of all hostilities between them, notwithstanding any state of war that might subsist between England and the rest of France. In particular neither party would allow its ports to be used as bases for attacks on the commerce of the other or for the sale of booty taken from the other's merchants at sea. These arrangements extended to the town of Gravelines, effectively putting an end to the use of the town as part of the French defensive ring around Calais. This agreement was ratified by both John the Fearless and Charles VI early in 1407. A second instrument agreed at the same time contained more controversial terms. Among other things the Flemings promised that their ships would no longer carry the cargoes of countries at war with England, in other words France and Scotland; and the Duke of Burgundy undertook that no attacks would be mounted against English territory around Calais, even from the French garrisons of Picardy and Artois which he controlled in his capacity as the French King's lieutenant in the region. These terms were presumably agreed separately because John anticipated resistance in Paris. But in the event even they were eventually accepted by the French royal council. The result was that John formally abandoned his professed intention to reopen his campaign against Calais in the spring, thus enabling the English to stand down the troops that they had begun to assemble to meet this threat.[60]

The conclusion of the Anglo-Flemish treaty opened the door to similar arrangements with the rest of France. The Duke of Brittany had opened his own negotiations with England in 1406 through the good offices of his mother, Henry IV's Queen. The bulk of Brittany's overseas trade was with Flanders, so progress was inevitably dependent on England's concurrent negotiations with the Flemings. Ultimately a provisional truce was agreed between Brittany and England in May 1407 and a final one in July to coincide with the

coming into force of the maritime truce with Flanders. These agreements were never formally submitted to Charles VI's ministers for approval, but it is clear that they did approve them. Indeed a similar agreement would almost certainly have been made with Charles himself, covering the ports of Picardy, Normandy and La Rochelle, had it not been for the repeated delays occasioned by his uncertain health.

In the second half of July 1407, when the French King was enjoying a respite, he authorised the Duke of Burgundy to negotiate a 'general pacification' with the English in the Channel and 'everywhere else on the sea to the north and west'. The damage and disputes arising from the current state of affairs, he observed, were becoming daily more obvious. This sentiment was more than a chancery formula. In Paris the conduct of relations with England was once more in the hands of the pacific Duke of Berry, who took up the business where it had been left off in the spring of 1406 before the French government had decided upon its disastrous double campaign. The Duke of Berry's private views have not been recorded, but all of the evidence suggests that he sincerely hoped for a permanent settlement with England, even if it meant undoing much of the work of his famous brother Charles V and conceding a large part of what Edward III had won at the treaty of Brétigny. A provisional truce was agreed with the English covering the march of Picardy from the Somme to Gravelines. Taken with the informal truces already in force on the Gascon march this brought a formal state of peace to every land front.

After months of low-level diplomatic contact Sir Thomas Erpingham and a small English embassy visited Paris in August 1407 with fresh proposals for a permanent peace and a marriage alliance. Erpingham was a gracious diplomat who knew the city and the leading political figures well, having shared Henry IV's exile there before his accession. If the French King had been in good health a grander embassy would no doubt have been sent. Even so Erpingham wrote to Henry IV from the French capital that the Duke of Berry and the other lords of Charles's council had entertained him and his colleagues 'as ambassadors of their rank had never been treated before'.[61]

Between October and December 1407 Parliament sat at Gloucester, a venue chosen for its proximity to the Welsh border where the Prince of Wales was engaged in the siege of Aberystwyth. In late November, as the proceedings were drawing to a close, an important French embassy arrived in the city. The ambassadors' instructions had been dictated by the Duke of Berry, whose confidant Casin de Sereinvilliers was one of their number. After

several days of negotiation they agreed to confirm and extend the piecemeal local truces which had suspended the fighting in France earlier in the year. In the cathedral, where Parliament was sitting, the mood had palpably changed. It was perhaps the most accommodating assembly of the reign. Henry IV's new conciliar government had received a cautious endorsement from the Commons. The Prince of Wales was commended for the 'great labour and diligence' that he had expended in Wales. In a notable gesture of trust the King's councillors were released from the oaths that had been imposed on them in the previous Parliament. Speaking on behalf of the Commons the Speaker Thomas Chaucer (the son of the poet) reminded the King of Sir John Tiptoft's call for 'good governance' and of the Commons' insistence the previous December on the appointment of new councillors. Trusting in the good sense and discretion of those councillors, he declared that the Commons were willing to grant one and a half standard subsidies, an unusually generous grant considering the absence at that point of any imminent threat to the realm and the fact that the previous subsidy was still being collected. Across the Channel, unbeknown to the government, the princes of the French royal family had already begun their prolonged lurch into civil war.[62]

Notes

1
AN JJ160/75 (summary in *Rec. doc*. Poitou, xxvi, 78–80); 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 331; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 274–8; 'Petite chron. Guyenne', no. 80. Mortagne belonged jointly to Margaret Stratton and Pons de Castillon, but Margaret occupied it by right of her late husband's conquest of the place from the French in the early 1370s: PRO C61/108, mm. 17, 8. Swinburne: PRO E101/69/2 (313), E101/364, m. 2d (Swinburne).

2
BN PO 24/Albret/85, 89, 98, 101; BN PO 785/Clermont/35, 2042/Morant/3, 2517/La Rochefoucault/4, 6, 2765/de Ste-Maure/14, 2765/de Ste-Maure/13, 2861/Tour d'Auvergne (de la)/15; BN Clair. 6/228, 19, p. 1292, 113/20; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 331; 'Petite chron. Guyenne', nos 83–4; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 354–8, 366; AN JJ160/242–3; *Choix de pièces*, i, 271; *Jurades de Bergerac*, i, 141, 145–6; Tarde, *Chron.*, 145–6 154–5. Peyroat appeals: PRO E28/17 (44, 47). Strengths: Vaissète, ix, 995; BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fol. 103. Some French operations may have occurred at Chalais as early as March: BN PO 2535/Rollat/3–5.

3
'Petite chron. Périgueux', 331; 'Petite chron. Guyenne', no. 84; *Arch. Hist. Gironde*, x, 71–3.

4
Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 316–22; *Victorial*, 139–42, 186–7, 193–6, 200–14 (quotation at 195). The confused chronology of *El Victorial* must be corrected to take account of the fact that the attack on the Gironde came at the end of the campaign, not at the beginning: see next note.

5

BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fol. 103; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 331, 332; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 356–8; *Victorial*, 184–6; PRO C61/111, m. 2. Galleys at Harfleur: *Doc. Clos des Galées*, i, nos 1613–14. Albret in Paris: BN Fr. 32510, fol. 343 (2 Oct.).

6

Parl. Rolls, viii, 339 [33]; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 366.

7

Chalais: 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 331; BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fol. 103. Companies: 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 330–1, 331, 332–3; *Reg. Jurade*, i, 88, 92; Tarde, *Chron.*, 155; *Inv. AC Périgueux*, 96; BN Coll. Périgord 52, p. 267; *Chron. R. St-Denis.*, iii, 366.

8

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 322–6; *Foed.*, viii, 406–7; *Roy. Lett.*, ii, 76–9; *Choix de pièces*, i, 270–1. Ships: *Chronographia*, iii, 258; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 81–2; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 462–4. Carracks: *Victorial*, 184, 188 (at Brest, July 1405); Suarez Fernandez, 87n[26].

9

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 324–8; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 82–4; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 464; *Chronographia*, iii, 259–60; *Eulogium*, iii, 408. Dates: *CPR 1405–9*, 40–4, 80, 84, 147, 148, 149, 163; *CCR 1401–5*, 460. *Patis*: R. Fenton, *A Historical Tour through Pembrokeshire* (1811), App., 43–4; *Proc. PC*, i, 279.

10

Hangest: *Choix de pièces*, i, 299–300. Trie: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 364; *Victorial*, 219. Return to France: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 328; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 84; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 474. Orléans: Jarry, 345; AN K55/37; *Coll. Bastard d'Estang*, no. 303.

11

Disappointment: **Chron. traïson et mort,* 299–302. Welsh defeats: Davies, 122–3, 123–4; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 470; Usk, *Chron.*, 214; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 348 [43]; Hardyng, *Chron.*, 364. Northumberland was in Paris by early July: *Reg. Jurade*, i, 49.

12

Victorial, 224; AD Côte d'Or B11942/13 (partial text in English: Vaughan [1966], 36–7). Treaty: *Choix de pièces*, i, 283–5.

13

Accommodation: *Titres Bourbon*, ii, no. 4630A. King's recovery: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 348. Council decisions: *Plancher, iii, nos 243–4, 254.

14

Funds: Pocquet (1940–1), 112; Nordberg, 20–22, 31–2, 33–4; Rey, 240–2, 604. Captain-General: *Plancher, iii, no. 254; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 125–6, 130. Reform: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 350; *Ord.*, ix, 108. Resistance: Baye, *Journ.*, i, 150–3; *Ord.*, ix, 127. Pero Niño: *Victorial*, 245–6.

15

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 350.

16

Court: PRO E101/43/38 (3/44, 45, 47); *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 358 (referring to Court as 'Earl' of Pembroke – he was 'lord of Pembroke', see *CPR 1401–5*, 315, *Foed.*, viii, 699). Beaufort: *Foed.*, viii, 432–5, 438–9; PRO E364/40, m. 2 (Bp Winchester), m. 2 (Norbury); PRO E101/43/38 (3/47); BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fol. 107; *Reg. Jurade*, i, 49 ('caution'). Largesse: BN Fr. n.a. 7623, fols 205–8. Agreements: PRO C76/89, m. 7, 6.

17

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 426–30 (full text of the letter in *Chron. traïson et mort*, 299–302 and Montreuil, Ep. 194, *Opera*, i, 280–2); Usk, *Chron.*, 214; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 130–1; *Arch. Mun. Bordeaux*, iii, 49.

18

Finance: *Reg. St-Jean d'Angély*, ii, 146, 178, 180, 192, 193–4, 205–7, 209, and *Reg. Jurade*, i, 61 (Saintonge); BN PO 595/de Cardaillac/26 (Rouergue); *Inv. AC Périgueux,* 96, and BN Fr. 26034/3803 (Périgord); Tyrrell, 135–6. Brantôme: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 366–8, 406–14; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 333–4; *Reg. Jurade*, i, 87.

19

'Petite chron. Périgueux', 334; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 418–22; *Reg. Jurade*, i, 91. Carlux, Commarque: BN Clair. 3/136. Ramonet: BN Coll. Périgord 52, p. 267; BN Coll. Doat 211, fols 50–52vo; *Reg. Jurade*, i, 89, 92.

20

Raimond's inheritance: *Reg. Jurade*, i, 90, 90–1 (for Harpeden, *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 424; Beauchet-Filleau, iv, 715, 716). Mussidan: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 422–4; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 334; *Jurades de Bergerac*, 149, 156; *Reg. Jurade*, i, 92. Vayres: *Reg. Jurade*, i, 9, 10–12, 43. On the complex rival claims to Vayres, part of the succession of Bérard III d'Albret (d. 1379): Boutruche, 392–3, *Arch. Hist. Gironde*, vi, 268–83, PRO C61/117, m. 9. The arrangements of 1406 are framed as a licence to take possession granted by Albret to Margaret, but they make no sense except on the footing that she was already in possession. Vayres had been confiscated by Richard II's officers on Bérard's defection in 1377. Margaret may have been put in possession by the Count of Foix, another cousin, who had a mortgage on Vayres, or by her late husband, who was the only one of Bérard's executors in the English allegiance: see *Le Trésor des Chartes d'Albret,* i, *Les Archives de Vayres*, ed. J.-B. Marquette (1973), 793.

21

Castelbon: BN PO 1172/Foix/18. Gaston: see *Reg. Jurade*, i, 132–3. Archambaud: BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fol. 83; PRO E28/14 (22 July 1403); E28/14 (22 July 1405); *Reg. Jurade*, i, 127.

22

Chron. R. St-Denis, iii, 414–16. Albret's appeal: BN Coll. Bourgogne 57, fol. 26; BN Fr. 26034/2839 (Berry).

23

Clermont, Alençon: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 416. Absences: ibid., iii, 394; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 130; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 334.

24

The account of the council meeting is based mainly on the letter of 7 Nov. from John's treasurer Jean Chousat: BN Coll. Bourgogne 57, fol. 26–26vo. Date: *Choix de pièces*, i, 289; *Ord.*, ix, 127; *Itin. Jean*, 355. Financial report: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 432–4. Calais: *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 339–40 [33]; PRO E101/43/38 (3/33, 34). Balinghem: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 400–4; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 185; *Plancher, no. 254. 'Grumbles': Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 180. Reform ordinance: *Choix de pièces*, i, 288–98. Tax ordinance: BN Fr. 25708/581.

25

Baye, *Journ.*, i, 168; Valois (1888), 111–13. *Taille*: BL Add. Ch. 6780; BN Fr. 25708/583–4.

26

Thomas: *Reg. Jurade*, i, 45. Finance: *Proc. PC*, i, 266–70; T. E. F. Wright (1984), 363. The second instalment of the tax, due in Nov. 1405, was

applied in repayment of a forced loan raised in September to pay for Henry IV's unsuccessful campaign in Wales: *Foed.*, viii, 412–14. The last Exchequer payment for Gascony was for Sir Thomas Swinburne's retinue: PRO E101/44/8. Calais: Grummitt, 288–9.

27

Eulogium, iii, 408; Gascoigne, *Lib. Verit.*, 228; *Proc. PC*, i, 290–2; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 338 [31]. See, generally, McNiven (1985), Biggs (2003), 192–3 and McFarlane (1972), 103–4.

28

Parl. Rolls, viii, 326 [2], 328 [8], 329–31 [11–17], 334–40 [27–33], 341 [38], 347–8 [39–41], 348–9 [44], 351–3 [49–53]. Savoisy: *CCR 1405–9*, 93–4; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 462. Madaillan: *Proc. PC*, i, 291.

29

Calais: PRO E364/46, m. 3 (Merlawe); PRO C49/48/4. Gascony: BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fols 69–71vo; *Rot. Parl.*, iii, 516 [12] (he was not subsequently re-employed: *HoC.*, iv, 599). Household: Given-Wilson (1986), 83–4, 94, 107–9, 136, 140–1.

30

Parl. Rolls, viii, 333, 339, 351, 353 [23, 31, 48, 53]; *Eulogium*, iii, 409.

31

Council: PRO E403/587, m. 8 (7 June). Progress: Biggs (2003), 197–9, 205. Finance: Steel, 93–4; *CPR 1405–8*, 203–4, 214–15. On Hende and Whittington, see *ODNB*, xxvi, 287–8; Barron, 205–8 and App. I (quotation at *Libelle*, 25).

32

Reg. Jurade, i, 40–1, 43–4, 45–6, 48, 51–2, 57, 61, 93–4, 124, 183–4, 185; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 496; *Doc. Clos des Galées*, i, nos 1617–19; 'Lettres ACA Barcelone', 333–4; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 134; *Reg. St Jean d'Angély*, ii, 194, 199; *Foed.*, viii, 336 (misdated), 456.

33

Jarry, 345; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 451–2; *Reg. Jurade*, i, 108–9, 162; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 335; *Lettres de Jean V*, i, no. 378, ii, no. 423; 'Chron. Brioc.', 89. The St Denis chronicler's manpower figure roughly corresponds to the 100,000 francs a month estimated as the cost in Jan. 1407: Baye, *Journ.*, i, 182–3, and compare Rey, ii, 415. Foix: *Reg. Jurade*, i, 98–9, 127, 145.

34

Lettres des rois, ii, 322; *Reg. Jurade*, i, 57, 61, 64, 66, 96, 97, 98–9, 109, 110.

35

Reg. Jurade, i, 17–20, 30–1, 33, 40–1, 42–3, 44–5, 46–7, 50–1, 54–5, 56, 62, 64–5, 67, 69–70, 94, 102, 113, 116, 119, 122–5, 141, 148–9; 'Chron. siège', 179–80; BL Cotton Caligula D IV, fol. 38. Topography: Drouyn, ii, 303–6; cf. the plan of *c.* 1700 at BN GED-3911, showing the castle and the old walls still standing within the modern fortifications of Vauban.

36

'Chron. siège', 179; *Reg. Jurade*, i, 112–14, 114–16, 119–20, 122–4. Treaty terms: 'Chron. siège', 180; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 133; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 336. Archbishop: *Lettres des rois*, ii, 321, 322–3.

37

Reg. Jurade, i, 48, 111, 121–2, 125, 126–31, 138, 139, 141, 145–6, 148, 150, 151, 153, 157, 160, 162, 166, 168, 172, 176, 180, 182, 183, 191, 196, 198, 200. Topography: Drouyn, i, 69–72, 74–80.

38
Defenders: PRO E364/46, m. 4 (Clitheroe); *Foed.*, viii, 456; *CPR 1405–8*, 305, 306. Henry IV: *Cal. Signet L.*, nos 657–8 (itinerary); PRO E403/589, mm. 1, 3 (7, 24 Oct.). Topography: Brown, Colvin and Taylor, *Hist. King's Works*, i, 423–31, 433–6.
39
Schnerb (1994), based on AN 919/24 (printed at *183–8), AD Côte d'Or B1547, and Jean Chousat's letters of 7 and 20 Nov. in BN Coll. Bourgogne 57, fols 26–26vo; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 448; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 135–6. Trees: AD Côte d'Or B307/485.
40
Itin. Jean, 356; BN Coll. Bourgogne 57, fols 26, 26vo (Chousat's letter); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 136–7. Relapse: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 139; *Ord.*, ix, 156–8. Cost of Gascony campaign: Baye, *Journ.*, i, 182–3. John's expenditure: *Schnerb (1994), 187–8. Artillery: AD Côte d'Or B1556, fol. 156.
41
'Petite chron. Périgueux', 336; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 452–8; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 496. Mines: *Reg. Jurade*, i, 140, 159, 183, 185; 'Chron. siège', 180. Marriage: *Reg. Jurade*, i, 146–7.
42
Reg. Jurade, i, 130–1, 138, 139, 145, 181–2, 184, 196, 224; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 362–4, 454; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 496; 'Chron. siège', 180; 'Petite chron. Guyenne', no. 85; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 134. Clignet: *Pastoralet*, 45, 76, 261. Inquiry: PRO C61/111, m. 2; *Arch. Hist. Gironde*, lv, 35–7.
43
Baye, *Journ.*, i, 182–3; *Reg. Jurade*, i, 151, 187–8; *Inv. AC Périgueux*, 94; 'Chron. siège', 180; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 458–60; 'Petite chron. Guyenne', no. 85. Venice: Jarry, 347.
44
'Chron. siège', 180; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 337; *Jurades de Bergerac*, i, 151–2, 153–4; *Inv. AC Périgueux*, 94; 'Lettres et missives', nos 1–4, 7–9, 16–21; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 182n^{1}. Marie: *Chartul. Henrici V*, xvi, 158–65; PRO C61/113, m. 15. Truces: *Reg. Jurade*, i, 178, 181, 183, 184, 185, 188–9, 197; *Arch. Hist. Gironde*, vi, 216–22; 'Lettres et missives', nos 23–4, 28, 32, 36.
45
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 137–8; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 450; *Itin. Jean*, 356, 357, *584; Jarry, 347. Charles VI: Baye, *Journ.*, i, 180–1.
46
Ord., xii, 225–7; Nordberg, 221–4; Rey, i, 120, 294, 298–9.
47
Finance: *Plancher, iii, 237–8; Vaughan (1966), 42–3; Nordberg, 31, 32, 33–4, 36; Pocquet (1940–1), 113. Grants: e.g. *Choix de pièces*, i, 223–4. Guyenne: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 151–2. The first attempt to rent a house to serve as a base for the assassins was made on about 24 June 1407: 'Enquête', 243.
48
Parl. Rolls, viii, 328–9 [9], 366–75 [66–91], 406 [142]; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 480–2. Role of Henry IV: Biggs (2008), 185–7, 202–3; *CCR 1405–9*, 261, 286.
49
Roy. Lett., ii, 145–8; *Foed.*, viii, 466; *CPR 1405–8*, 309; *Eulogium*, iii, 411;

St Albans Chron., ii, 498 (great council, without details); PRO C76/90, m. 6 (arrears cleared). Borrowing: *CPR 1405–8*, 321, 335, 414–15 (recording loans generally made earlier); *Foed.*, viii, 488–9; Steel, 95–6; Grummitt, 290–1, 293 (giving Dec. 1406 as the date of the mutiny, which I think too early); T. E. F. Wright (1984), 116–28 (giving 9 Mar., too late). Welsh campaign: *CCR 1405–9*, 286. 'Suitable place': *Proc. PC*, i, 296.

50

Grummitt, 293–7; Given-Wilson (1986), 94, 109–10, 130–1; T. E. F. Wright (1984), 363; T. E. F. Wright (1995), 71–9; Steel, 96–102 (assignments after 1407).

51

Pseudo-Richard: *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 416; Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii, 264; *Eulogium*, iii, 402–3. Ward: *Exch. R. Scot.*, iv, 71, 213, 239, 289. Northumberland: *Cal. Signet L.*, no. 668; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 550–4.

52

Wyntoun, *Orig. Chron.*, vi, 412–15; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 60, 62; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 472; *CPR 1405–8*, 168; *Acts Parl. Scot.*, xii, 20–2; AN J677/19 (French alliance).

53

PRO E101/43/39 (Menai); 'Ann. O. Glyn Dŵr', 152–4; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 528; Usk, *Chron.*, 160, 240–2; Roberts; Davies, 122–5; J. E. Lloyd, 136–7. Prince: *Foed.*, viii, 436–7.

54

Roy. Lett., ii, 346–7; *Vaissète, x, 1928–9; *Reg. Jurade*, i, 92–3, 159, 264, 265–6; *Inv. AC Toulouse,* 483; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 460–2; Bernis, 'Chron.', para. 133. Surrender terms: AN J302/122, 123. On the arbitrators: Pépin, 29–30. Cost of siege: Portal, 74.

55

**Chron. traïson et mort, 299–302*; Montreuil, Ep. 194, *Opera*, i (1), 280–2.

56

Channel squadrons: e.g. 1400: PRO E403/564, mm. 3, 12, E403/564, m. 13, E403/567, m. 5. 1401: *Proc. PC*, ii, 56. 1402: PRO E403/571, m. 27; *CPR 1401–5*, 124. 1403: PRO E101/69/2 (310). 1404: PRO E101/69/2 (311, 312), E101/43/30, E101/43/34 (20), E101/43/38 (1/49). 1405: PRO E101/43/38 (3/8, 9, 4/58); *Proc. PC*, i, 250–1, ii, 93–4. Pero Niño: *Joüon, 194–200; *Victorial*, 262–76 (quotation, 263). Damage in France: BN Fr. 25708/532 (cf. 534, 535).

57

Convoys: *Foed.*, viii, 326; *CPR 1401–5*, 298–9; *CCR 1402–5*, 185–6, 186; PRO C61/109, m. 7; *Proc. PC*, ii, 81–2; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 462; *Roy. Lett.*, ii, 151. English merchant fleet: PRO E28/12 (28 Dec. 1403); Burwash, 178 (Table A, Group I). French merchant ships: Touchard, 101–3; Mollat (1952), 340–1; Tranchant, 163–70.

58

Rouen: Mollat (1952), 5, 7, 606; Fréville, i, 269, *ii, 282–3. Salt: Rey, i, 250–1; Mollat (1952), 19, 598–9, 604. Harfleur: BN Fr. 25708/546. Incidents: *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 386, 498; *Cal. Inq. Misc.*, vii, no. 350.

59

Montreuil, *Opera*, ii, 126. On Jean, ibid., ii, 7–41, iv, 304–6, 314–18.

60

Non-participation of Flanders: AD Nord 541/150744 (instructions to Flemish ambassadors, 24 Sept. 1406); B541/150742 (10 Sept. 1406); Schnerb (1994), 181, 182, *188. Negotiations: AD Nord B18823/23629

(22 Sept. 1406), B542/15068, B548/1830223; *Varenbergh, 548. Terms: *Foed.*, viii, 469–76; *Rec. Ord. Pays-Bas*, iii, nos 43–4; AD Nord 549/1511212 (order to observe the truce on the march of Picardy, 15 June). Troops stood down: *Foed.*, viii, 466, 476–8; *CCR 1405–9*, 257. In force: *Foed.*, viii, 469–76, 485–6; *Rec. Ord. Pays-Bas*, iii, no. 50.

61

Brittany: *Foed.*, viii, 490–1, 843–4. John V had refused to allow the Anglo-Flemish truce to be proclaimed in Brittany until the Anglo-Breton truce had come into force: AD Nord B18824/23844, *Huguet, 394–5. Negotiations for French truce: AD Nord B18223/23471 (letter of Jean de Thoisy, 2 June 1407); AD Nord B546/1509387; *Foed.*, viii, 491–2. A conference between the two sides was arranged for 1 Aug.: *Foed.*, viii, 486–7. It was put off when the King suffered a fresh relapse: AD Nord, B18822/2205921, 23, B546/1509388. Truce for Picardy: AN J546/2, 4. Low-level negotiations: PRO C76/90, mm. 22, 11, 7. Erpingham: *Foed.*, viii, 484–5; AN J646/1; *Cal. Signet L.*, no. 704.

62

Oxford, Bodley MS Carte 113, fols 263–4 (instructions); PRO E30/1251 (French draft extension of truce); AN J646/4 (Picardy truce); *Foed.*, viii, 504–9 (Guyenne). Parliament: *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 421–2, 427 [13, 24].

CHAPTER VI

In the Rue Vieille du Temple: The Road to Civil War, 1407–1411

On the night of 23 November 1407 Louis of Orléans was assassinated in a Paris street by agents of the Duke of Burgundy. It was a carefully planned operation. About a week before the murder a man dressed as a student had rented a house by the corner of the Rue Vieille du Temple and the Rue des Blancs-Manteaux in the Marais quarter. Several men with horses were seen to arrive over the following days and moved in. Not far from the house was the Porte Barbette, a disused gateway standing over the Rue Vieille du Temple. Beyond it stood the enclosure of the Hôtel Barbette, the residence of the Queen. That evening Louis was at dinner with Isabelle when a royal valet, who was in on the plot, appeared in the hall pretending to have come from the King. Charles, he said, required his presence immediately in order to deal with some urgent business. Shortly after eight o'clock Louis emerged from the Hôtel Barbette and made his way down the Rue Vieille du Temple towards the Hôtel Saint-Pol. He was riding on a mule, bare-headed, well-fed and singing, with an escort of three mounted men and four attendants with torches.

Several eye-witnesses described what followed. As Louis passed the opening of the Rue des Blancs-Manteaux about a dozen armed men rushed out from the shadows crying *'À mort! À mort!'* They dragged Louis from his mule. Two of the attendants who tried to protect him were bludgeoned to the ground and one of them killed. A page played dead. The rest fled in terror. Louis' assailants crowded round him as he knelt on the ground. 'What's going on?' the prince cried. One of the assailants lit him up with a torch while another struck him with an axe as he knelt on the ground. The rest crowded round and battered him with heavy wooden clubs. A neighbour screamed 'Murder!' from an upper window. A tall man in a red cape emerged from the house, surveyed the body and said, 'Put out your torches out and let's go. He's dead.' They set fire to the building from which they had emerged. Then they mounted their horses and fled along the Rue des Blancs-Manteaux shouting 'Fire!' and throwing spiked iron caltrops after them to impede pursuit. The page rose from the ground and took up the cry of

‘Murder’. Drawn by the commotion, people began to appear from nearby buildings. The Constable, Charles d’Albret, arrived from the Hôtel Saint-Pol a few minutes later. He found Louis lying in the mud, his right arm broken, his left hand severed, his face crushed and his brains spattered over the ground. Only one of his attendants was still at the scene. ‘Alas, my lord is dead,’ he cried. The body was carried to the nearby mansion of the Marshal de Rieux and laid out upon a table. Later it was placed in a lead-lined coffin and taken to the church of the Blancs-Manteaux, where the friars kept vigil over it with prayers and psalms through the night.[1]

The Duke of Burgundy had originally resolved upon the murder of his rival back in the summer after failing to reverse the expulsion of his allies from the royal council. Several of his closest counsellors were involved. According to well-informed Orléanist sources they included Jean de Croy, a Picard nobleman and intimate of the Duke’s on whom he had increasingly depended for advice over the years; Jacques d’Heilly, another Picard who had been among the leaders of the Scottish expedition of 1402 and had become one of the Duke’s most valuable military retainers; and the lawyer Jean de Nielles, who had served as John’s spokesman during the attempted *coup d’état* of August 1405. The task of carrying out the deed was confided to a retainer of the Duke called Raoul d’Anquetonville, a debt-ridden Norman squire with a history of shady financial dealings, who had briefly been installed by Philip the Bold as Treasurer of France before being pushed aside by the Duke of Orléans. His first attempt to rent a suitable house in the Marais was made around 24 June. John then seems to have had second thoughts, perhaps because he hoped to re-establish his position in the government by agreement. If so his hopes were dashed when he returned to Paris in September. The circumstances are obscure but it is clear that the two cousins quarrelled violently. There were many political issues to divide them in the autumn of 1407: the papal schism, the affairs of the Low Countries, the government’s finances. Debate on these questions can only have served to demonstrate how marginal John had become in the counsels of the French state. In early November he finally decided to do away with his cousin. Anquetonville rented the house in the Rue des Blancs-Manteaux, suborned the royal valet who brought the fatal summons to the Queen’s dinner table, and hired the thugs who carried out the murder. He was probably the tall man in the red hood who called off the killers when their work was done. All of these men were well rewarded. Anquetonville himself passed the rest of his life in hiding, constantly afraid of assassination. ‘Unlike other people I cannot go where I please,’ he complained two years later in a letter to the

Duke. But, perhaps for the first time in many years, he was not short of money. John showered him with gifts, appointed him to sinecures at his court and awarded him a generous pension.[2]

At first John the Fearless hoped to conceal his responsibility for the murder. He had carefully covered his tracks. In the middle of November he had agreed to a formal reconciliation with his cousin. They had attended Mass together just three days before Louis' death and exchanged oaths of perpetual friendship. They had shared wine and spices on the eve of the attack. These latest exhibitions of public affection occurred as John's hired assassins were completing their preparations in the Rue des Blancs-Manteaux. The two princes had agreed to dine together on the Sunday after the killers were due to strike. John kept up the act after the news of the murder broke. He feigned disbelief when the news was brought to him. He appeared grief-stricken when it was confirmed. He wept and groaned as he helped escort the coffin to the Celestine church on the following morning and stood prominently among the mourners at the grandiose funeral service which followed. But the net was already closing around him. The Provost of Paris, Guillaume de Tignonville, was a clever and cultivated man, an experienced criminal judge and an Orléanist. He ordered all the gates of the city to be closed or guarded while he and the judicial staff of the Châtelet conducted an extremely thorough investigation. They took statements within hours from a large number of witnesses. They sought out every shopkeeper or water-carrier who had dealt with the occupants of the rented rooms in the Rue des Blancs-Manteaux. The first suspect was Aubert de Chauny, a declared enemy of the Duke of Orléans whose wife was one of the many women that he had seduced. But it was quickly established that he had been away from Paris for some months. It then came to light that some of the assassins had been observed making for the rear entrance of the Hôtel de Bourgogne as they fled the scene.[3]

On 25 November the Provost reported on his investigation to the royal council assembled at the Hôtel Saint-Pol. The chamber was packed. All of the royal princes and the officers of state were present together with a large crowd of noblemen and functionaries. The Provost said that he had not yet identified the murderers. But he was satisfied that he would find out the truth if he were allowed to enter the houses of the princes and the King's ministers. Most of them agreed at once. But John held back. Rising from his seat he took the Dukes of Berry and Anjou into another room. There he confessed what he had done. Louis, he said, had been murdered by Raoul d'Anquetonville on his orders. The Devil had taken possession of him. It was the only explanation he had to offer them. The Duke

of Berry was speechless. He broke down in tears and told John that he had better leave at once. For the moment Berry and Anjou kept their counsel. But on the following day, the 26th, the council reconvened in the Hôtel de Nesle, the Duke of Berry's immense mansion on the left bank opposite the Louvre. John the Fearless arrived, apparently intending to participate. Berry turned him away at the door. Returning to the council chamber he reported the Duke of Burgundy's confession to the astonished gathering. The councillors dispersed shocked, some of them weeping. The news quickly spread across Paris. John made straight for the Hôtel de Bourgogne, ordered his horses and fled by the Porte Saint-Denis with just six attendants. As soon as the councillors realised that he had gone there was a cry of anger. The impulsive and violent Clignet de Bréban found 120 men-at-arms and pursued him north along the Amiens road. But John was too far ahead of them and the troops returned empty-handed to Paris.[4]

Forty years after Louis of Orléans' death an inscription was placed by his tomb in the Orléans chapel of the Celestine church, which was eventually swept away when the church was converted into a barracks during the Revolution of 1789. Louis had been the 'noblest of men while he lived, but another man strove to push himself in front, and out of jealousy had him murdered,' it proclaimed, 'for which cause much blood has been shed even to this day'. The murder of the Duke of Orléans opened one of the most wretched chapters of the history of France. It divided the country for a generation, provoking a brutal civil war which opened the door for the invasion and partial occupation of France by the English. In the first few weeks after the murder it seemed that the Duke of Burgundy might get away with it. On 10 December 1407 the dead man's widow, Valentine Visconti, made a dramatic entrance into Paris in a black-draped litter drawn by black horses and escorted by a large retinue clothed in full mourning. The cortège went directly to the Hôtel Saint-Pol where Valentine, accompanied by her children, prostrated herself theatrically before the King, crying out for vengeance. The princes had come out to meet her at the gates of the city, a gesture of sympathy for a woman who had been hounded from the capital twelve years before. It soon became clear that they had nothing to offer her but shared outrage and kind words. They were without leadership. Their natural leader was dead. The King drifted in and out of coherence, barely following what was happening. The Dauphin, Louis Duke of Guyenne, was only eleven years old and married to the Duke of Burgundy's daughter. Charles, the new Duke of Orléans, was just thirteen, a sensitive young man, devoid of political experience, who

had already begun to write the poetry that would one day be his main claim to fame.

Power fell by default into the hands of the aged Duke of Berry and his nephew, the vacillating and ineffectual Duke of Anjou. Remembering the events of 1405 they were terrified by the prospect of civil war. They were cowed by the unspoken threat that John might be driven into the arms of the English. They knew that the population of Paris, which associated the Duke of Orléans with embezzlement, corruption and taxation, was openly sympathetic to his murderer. It shortly became apparent that the same was true of other towns of northern France. The Duke of Burgundy had expected the princes to mount a punitive military expedition against him. There were certainly men on the council who would have supported this course. Jean de Montaigu, the Master of the Royal Household, was one of them. The Duke of Bourbon was probably another. But it did not happen. Instead, shortly before Christmas the Dukes of Berry and Anjou sent messengers to Flanders with proposals for a conference at which they hoped to reach an accommodation with their terrible kinsman. In the meantime the council made him a conciliatory gesture. They restored his pension, which had been cut off by Louis of Orléans. The Queen even sent him the traditional gift of jewellery at New Year.[5]

The conference opened on 20 January 1408 at Amiens. For the Duke of Burgundy it was an ideal venue: a densely populated industrial city on the Somme with a radical tradition dating back to the urban revolutions of the 1350s. John, says a chronicler, was ‘well loved of the Amienois’. The winter was one of the harshest for many years. The Dukes of Berry and Anjou rode across the plain of Picardy in weather so cold that it froze the rivers and buried the roads in deep snowdrifts. They were accompanied by Jean de Montaigu with part of the royal council and an escort of 200 gentlemen. They arrived at Amiens to find John already installed. He cut a quite different figure from the nervous, apologetic individual whom they had last seen in the Hôtel de Nesle. Encouraged by the limp response of the council in Paris, strongly backed by his kinsmen and his subjects in Flanders and Artois, John had resolved to brazen it out. He had his brothers with him, Anthony Duke of Brabant and Philip Count of Nevers, his German allies the Counts of Namur and Cleves and a host of noblemen from every part of his domains. Several hundred of his soldiers were stationed at strategic points across the city. A large painted sign was hung above the entrance to his quarters showing two crossed lances, one with a sharpened steel tip and the other with a blunted cap, the arms of peace and war. It was up to his antagonists to choose.

In this intimidating atmosphere John gave a grand banquet for the Dukes of Berry and Anjou on the evening of their arrival, attended by heralds and musicians. On the surface all was friendship and goodwill, beneath it anger and resentment. The princes had come to Amiens hoping for some formal act of contrition which would enable the Duke of Burgundy to be pardoned without too much loss of face for the monarchy. But when the parties met on the following morning in the bishop's palace under the shadow of the great apse of the cathedral, John conceded nothing. In the presence of a crowd of notables he told the astonished princes that the murder of the Duke of Orléans had been a just and righteous act. He had ordered it out of duty because Louis was intent on destroying the King, the royal family and the French realm and had resolved to seize the throne for himself. John had brought with him three theologians of the University of Paris to support this line. One of them, who was to become notorious over the following months, was a Norman called Jean Petit who had been in the service of the Duke of Burgundy for the past two years. Petit was a natural controversialist, a learned and skilful rhetorician who had occasionally acted as a spokesman for the University. Supported by his two colleagues he declared that the murder of the Duke of Orléans had been lawful in the sight of God. Indeed it would have been a grave sin to spare him. John for his part declared himself willing to explain himself in person to Charles VI. But he told them that he had no intention of apologising and insisted that Charles should be grateful for what he had done. The talks lasted for ten days before breaking up inconclusively.[6]

As they left Amiens the Dukes of Berry and Anjou warned John not to come to Paris unless he was summoned. They had no desire to see him appear in the capital where the strength of his support among the populace and in the University was becoming increasingly evident. But that was exactly what John intended to do. He told them that he was entitled to defend his conduct before the King. His real objective was obvious. It was to mobilise his following in the capital and to take control of the 'absent' King and the eleven-year-old Dauphin, symbols of an authority which they were incapable of exercising themselves. As soon as the conference broke up John summoned troops to Arras to march on Paris. Others, coming from Burgundy, were directed to assemble outside the gates of the capital to await his arrival. In Paris the princes were paralysed with fear. Valentine Visconti refused to stay and confront her husband's murderer. She fled to the Loire and shut herself in the heavily defended fortress of Blois.[7]

The animating spirits of the resistance were the Queen, who was

determined to keep the Dauphin out of the Duke of Burgundy's hands, and Jean de Montaigu, the dominant figure in the civil service. They found a valuable ally in the eighteen-year-old John V Duke of Brittany, who emerged in these weeks as a critical player. John V was not interested in bidding for power in Paris. His ambitions were confined to his duchy. But he found himself increasingly drawn into court politics in order to protect his own interests in Brittany. In 1406 the Duke of Burgundy had repudiated the long-standing links of his family with the house of Montfort and allied himself to the Penthièvres, their principal rivals. The new alliance was sealed by the marriage of one of John's daughters to the twelve-year-old Olivier de Blois Count of Penthièvre. Rather later John of Burgundy was appointed as the young Count's guardian. This meant that any civil war in France was likely to reopen ancient divisions in Brittany which could only destabilise the Duke's government there. John V had responded by aligning himself with the Duke of Orléans. A treaty between the two men was sealed in September 1406 at Tours as Louis passed through the town on his way to the Gironde. At the same time John V married his sister to Louis of Orléans' principal collaborator in the south, Bernard VII Count of Armagnac, who would eventually emerge as the leader of the anti-Burgundian party in France. Louis' death no doubt deprived John V's alliance of some of its value, but he remained committed to it. He was genuinely shocked by the murder and by the Duke of Burgundy's brazen defence of it. He renewed his alliance with Louis of Orléans' widow. In spite of his youth John V was already an astute politician. He was certainly more decisive and energetic than the elderly and hesitant hand-wringers ranged in opposition to the Duke of Burgundy in Paris. He also disposed of substantial forces. As soon as the Queen learned of John the Fearless's plans she summoned the Duke of Brittany to her aid. He put aside all other business and left Nantes on 4 February with a large entourage of noblemen and councillors and a military escort. An Italian newsletter put his total strength at 1,500 mounted men. By the 15th he had reached Paris.[8]

Shortly afterwards, on about 18 February 1408, the Duke of Burgundy marched south from Arras accompanied by an armed force of some 800 men. Paris was in turmoil. Posters and manifestos appeared on the doors of churches demanding the implementation of the Burgundian programme of reform. Agitators organised public meetings. Criers passed through the crossroads and open spaces proclaiming to the sound of bells and trumpets the successive ordinances by which the Orléanist majority on the council tried to maintain control. The University, ever supportive of the house of

Burgundy, acquired the use of the abbey church of Saint-Martin-des-Champs in northern Paris and the government found itself denounced in thunderous sermons from its pulpit. On 25 February John of Burgundy reached Saint-Denis. The Dukes of Berry, Anjou and Brittany came out of the city to meet him bearing a written command issued by the council in the King's name not to enter Paris with more than 200 men. John entertained them to a splendid banquet but brushed aside the command. On 28 February he made a triumphant entry into the city through the Porte Saint-Denis. He was accompanied by his two brothers, his brother-in-law the Count of Cleves and a new ally the Duke of Lorraine, who at the time of John's last show of force in 1405 had brought his troops to support the Duke of Orléans. John passed down the Rue Saint-Denis surrounded by twelve bodyguards on foot, armed to the teeth, and escorted by a cavalcade of more than a thousand armed soldiers formed up in battalions. The Parisians crowded into the adjoining lanes and crossroads with their families, cheering and shouting 'Noël!' as if they were witnessing the *joyeuse entrée* of a king. John took no risks with his safety. The Hôtel de Bourgogne was sealed off from all directions by manned road-blocks and garrisoned by a force of Genoese crossbowmen. Shortly a new palace began to rise on the site, constructed at vast cost and dominated by the famous tower in which John slept at night. The tower still looms over the Rue Étienne Marcel, the only part of the Parisian palace of the Dukes of Burgundy to survive.[9]

On the morning of 8 March 1408, in spite of the attempts of the other princes to dissuade him, the Duke of Burgundy offered his public defence of the murder in a carefully choreographed ceremony in the great hall of the Hôtel Saint-Pol. The hall had been searched and every entrance sealed except for the one by which the audience filed in under the gaze of the Duke's guards. John himself rode to the palace waving graciously at the crowds and accompanied by a cavalcade of noblemen and well-wishers so large that the tail of the procession was still emerging from the Hôtel de Bourgogne as the front reached the palace gates more than a mile away. The King was 'absent', as he had been with brief interludes since the beginning of January. The Queen declined to attend. The Dauphin presided. The Dukes of Berry, Anjou and Brittany sat with the leading members of the court nobility on a bench beside him. Not all of them were content to be there. 'I am here to serve the King, not you,' the Duke of Brittany had replied when presented with John's summons. On a raised platform at one side of the hall the Provost of Paris sat surrounded by the sergeants of the Châtelet with the officers of state, the entire royal council and the judges of

the Parlement ranged on steps around him. Opposite them on another platform stood the Duke's spokesman Jean Petit, accompanied by the Duke's Chancellor, officers and councillors. The Rector and doctors and masters of the University, some 400 invited citizens of Paris and a large number of students and inhabitants who had slipped in with the official delegations were crammed into the body of the hall. John himself entered last, alone, wearing chain mail under his tunic. He bowed silently to the assembled princes, who had been waiting in their seats for more than three hours. Then he sat down between the Dukes of Berry and Brittany, 'at which', says the official Burgundian report, 'the said Duke of Brittany was none too pleased'.

Jean Petit addressed the assembly for more than four hours in a relentless monotone. His argument was presented in the form of a syllogism. It is 'just, legitimate and meritorious' to kill tyrants; Louis of Orléans was a tyrant; therefore the Duke of Burgundy was right to kill him. Most of the discourse which followed was devoted to supporting the minor premise. The Duke of Orléans had been debauched, corrupt and tyrannical. He had been an adulterer. He had dabbled in the black arts. Above all he had been a traitor. He had taken control of the King's government in his own interest, pushing through unnecessary taxes in order to line his own pockets. His ultimate object, however, had been to seize his brother's throne. He had made a pact with Henry of Lancaster that they would support each other in deposing their respective sovereigns. He had promised the Avignon Pope to support him in return for his sanctioning the deed. He had bewitched the King with magic spells to prolong his illness and hasten his death. When this failed he had made several attempts to poison him. He had procured at least one attempt on the life of the Dauphin. He had plotted to banish the Queen to Luxembourg in order to get control of her children. As the King's subject and kinsman the Duke of Burgundy could not properly stand by while these outrages continued, nor did the law require him to. When the state fell under the control of a tyrant every man was authorised to vindicate the public interest by killing him. 'It follows', Petit declared, 'that my lord of Burgundy is not to be blamed for the fate of that criminal the Duke of Orléans and that our lord the King … should commend him for what he has done, rewarding him with love, honour and riches.' These propositions were illustrated with a wealth of citations from the Old and New Testaments, the imperial codes, the patristic fathers and authors ancient and modern from Aristotle to Boccaccio. At the end of his oration Petit turned to John and asked him whether he adopted all that had been said on his behalf. 'I adopt it', John replied.[10]

In the audience Petit's speech met with a mixed reaction even among John's natural supporters. The theoretical justification of tyrannicide aroused serious misgivings among many of the academics present. The issue was destined to divide the University for years to come and to weaken John's following in one of his most significant constituencies. The princes and royal councillors were shocked and angered by the extravagant allegations of treason and attempted murder levelled against the dead man. The young Dauphin hardly understood what was being said. 'Is it my good uncle of Orléans who was out to kill my lord the King?', he asked of Charles de Savoisy who was sitting near him. The rest of the audience was perplexed. None of them dared to dissent openly. The Duke of Burgundy, however, was highly satisfied. The prepared text, on which Petit had been working with a group of lawyers and theologians for a month, was later reproduced at John's expense in four beautifully bound copies illuminated in blue and gold under the title *The Justification of the Duke of Burgundy*. Years later Jean Gerson, one of those who broke with John of Burgundy over his sponsorship of Jean Petit, would draft letters patent for the King in which the *Justification* was characterised as 'a text for damnation, a treatise for death, a charter of dishonour and a message from the pit of Hell'.[11]

On the following day the King, who had been oblivious to all of this, briefly recovered his wits. The Duke of Burgundy took advantage of the moment to go before him and obtain his pardon. A formal act was drawn up which recited John's version of events and recorded the King's entire satisfaction with the deed. Another, prepared at the same time, gave him a free hand to pursue and punish all those who might seek to dishonour him. These instruments were pushed through at a hurriedly convened council meeting in the presence of the King and the princes a few hours before Charles relapsed once more into incoherence. Most of the councillors present must have assented through gritted teeth. Two days later, on 11 March 1408, the Queen and her brother Louis of Bavaria left Paris, taking the Dauphin with them. The Duke of Burgundy was furious, but the Duke of Brittany escorted them out of the city with a substantial troop of men-at-arms and there was nothing that he could do to stop them. Isabelle took refuge in the fortress-town of Melun on the Seine thirty miles south of Paris, which was guarded by a large Breton garrison. She was joined there by the Dukes of Berry and Anjou, the Constable and Jean de Montaigu. On 18 March they held their own council in the fortress in the absence of the Duke of Burgundy and made plans to recruit troops for the day when they would be in a position to fight back.[12]

The Duke of Burgundy told the citizens of Paris that he had come to 'discover who were the King's real friends'. But, as he had found in 1405, it was not easy to take control of the state against the persistent resistance of the council and the civil service. With the King burbling gibberish in his quarters at Saint-Pol and the rest of the royal family and leading members of the council out of the capital, it was impossible for him to do much. During Charles's brief interval of lucidity in March John had been able to procure the dismissal of Clignet de Bréban the Admiral of France, a bitter adversary who had tried to pursue him as he fled from Paris at the end of November. He profited by the King's next moment of coherence to remove the Provost of Paris Guillaume de Tignonville, who had been far too efficient in investigating the murder of the Duke of Orléans. He was replaced in this sensitive office by a reliable Burgundian loyalist Pierre des Essarts. But these were isolated victories. Charles VI recovered his senses at about the end of April and some of the princes including the Duke of Berry drifted back to the capital over the following weeks. John was unable to unblock the flow of royal largesse into his coffers. Nor could he reshape the council or the administration in his own image. For the time being both remained largely the preserve of Orléanists.[13]

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In June 1408 the Duke of Burgundy was forced to turn his attention elsewhere. The principality of Liège was an Imperial territory on the Meuse bordering on the duchy of Luxembourg. It was ruled by the bishop-elect of Liège, John of Bavaria, a worldly soldier who had been elected by the cathedral chapter in 1390 at the age of seventeen but had never been formally consecrated because he declined to be ordained as a priest. 'Hardly the image of a bishop,' a chronicler remarked on the spectacle of John riding in full armour at the head of a troop of cavalry, 'more like Hector or Achilles.' Liège, like many industrial towns of the Low Countries, had suffered for much of the fourteenth century from bitter class warfare in the course of which the prerogatives of the bishop had been progressively eroded. John of Bavaria had been chosen as bishop, an office for which he was in every way unfitted, in the hope that his family connections would enable him to impose his authority. He was the brother of William Count of Hainaut and Holland. He had been a stalwart ally of the Dukes of Burgundy, leading his troops to Paris in support of Philip the Bold's attempt to seize power in December 1401 and again when Philip's son tried the same thing in August 1405. Louis of Orléans had retaliated by supporting the citizens of Liège in their opposition to their bishop and at some

point in 1404 entered into a formal alliance with them. In September 1406 there was a fresh rebellion in Liège. The citizens expelled John of Bavaria and his supporters. They elected a regent, Henry lord of Perwez, to govern in his place and set up his nephew as their bishop with the support of Louis and the Avignon Pope Benedict XIII. Over the following months Henry of Perwez and the Liègeois systematically conquered the whole principality until the Bishop was left with nothing but the town of Maastricht. The Liègeois tried to besiege Maastricht over the winter of 1407–8 but were frustrated by the intense cold. Then on 31 May 1408 they tried again. The news must have reached John the Fearless in Paris in early June. Faced with the prospect of the extinction of his brother-in-law's government in a strategically critical region of the Low Countries he resolved upon a trial of strength with the men of Liège. On 5 July John left Paris for Flanders.[14]

The Queen and her brother had been preparing for this moment for some weeks. In May they had procured an ordinance from the King during one of his periods of coherence installing Louis of Bavaria as the head of the Dauphin's household, thus giving them effective control over his person. Then at the end of June they managed to extricate Charles himself from Paris and bring him to Melun. A council meeting was held in the castle on 2 July. The King, apparently lucid, presided. The Dauphin, the Duke of Berry, Louis of Bavaria, the Constable and Guillaume de Tignonville, the displaced Provost of Paris, attended along with a strong official contingent which included Jean de Montaigu and his brother (now Archbishop of Sens). They agreed upon an ordinance revoking the pardon granted to John the Fearless in March. For the moment the ordinance remained secret while the council completed its preparations. The Duke of Berry and the Constable summoned their military retainers. The Queen appealed for support to the Duke of Brittany who arrived at Melun with a large troop of soldiers on 24 August. On the 26th the Queen returned to the capital in a gilded carriage, surrounded by the councillors and household officers of her husband and accompanied by the Dauphin on a white charger led by four liveried grooms. With her came the princes, the Constable, a host of prominent noblemen and three battalions of men-at-arms in full armour with banners unfurled for war. 'Think what you like', was the motto painted on their pennons. Two days later Valentine Visconti made her own entry, borne through the city to the Hôtel de Bohême in a black-draped litter drawn by black horses and followed by a line of carriages bearing the notables of Louis of Orléans' household.[15]

On 5 and 6 September 1408 a great council met in the hall of St

Louis in the Louvre. The Queen and the Dauphin presided. All of the royal princes apart from the Duke of Burgundy were there, together with a large contingent of bishops, judges and officials. The assembly approved a new ordinance conferring all the King's powers of government on the Queen and the Dauphin during Charles's 'absences'. Valentine Visconti appeared dressed in her mourning clothes and accompanied by her eldest son Charles, the thirteen-year-old Duke of Orléans, to demand justice and vengeance on the murderer of her husband. The council's ordinance revoking the Duke of Burgundy's pardon was confirmed and published and the decision was made to proceed against the Duke for his crimes.

Five days later, on 11 September 1408, these decisions were reiterated in the same hall in a characteristic piece of political theatre. It was the mirror image of John the Fearless's notorious assembly at the Hôtel Saint-Pol six months before. The attendance was much the same. Another Norman theologian took the stand, Thomas du Bourg, abbot of the Benedictine monastery of Cérisy, an elderly cleric about whom very little is known, who had been selected by Valentine Visconti as her spokesman. He could not match Petit's learning but far outdid his oratory. The Duke of Orléans, he declared, had been a martyr to the service of the King, killed to serve the ambitions of his rival. Louis' blood cried out from the ground calling for vengeance. Nothing less would vindicate the demands of justice, compassion and kinship or serve the interests of the state. The Abbot of Cérisy challenged Jean Petit's libels against the Duke of Orléans. He recounted the Duke of Burgundy's hypocritical acts of reconciliation on the eve of the murder and his bogus exhibitions of grief afterwards. He refuted Petit's defence of tyrannicide point by point, building up to a tremendous emotional peroration in which he addressed the Queen, the Dauphin, the princes and the audience one after the other, calling for their tears to honour the murdered man. When he had sat down the lawyer Guillaume Cousinot rose. Cousinot had once been a retainer of John the Fearless but had recently entered the service of the Duchess. Approaching the Queen and the Dauphin he pointed at Valentine Visconti and stated her demands: the Duke of Burgundy must be arrested, brought to the Louvre and made to confess his sin on his knees before Valentine and her son in the presence of the whole court; the ceremony should then be repeated from specially constructed scaffolds at the Palace on the Cité and again at the Hôtel Saint-Pol and once more on the site of the murder; every mansion of the Duke of Burgundy in the capital should be razed to the ground and a monumental cross built on the site with an inscription recording his crime; the house from which the killers

had emerged should be demolished and replaced by a college of canons charged with reciting six masses a day for the soul of the dead man; another college was to be founded at Orléans. The Duke of Burgundy should be held in prison until all this had been done. Finally he should be fined a million *écus*, to be used to found hospitals and to distribute alms to the poor, and then exiled from France for at least twenty years. The Dauphin, who had not yet turned twelve, was torn between loyalty to the memory of Louis of Orléans and the cause of his father-in-law. But his part had already been scripted by others. Reading from a prepared statement he declared that the Duke of Orléans was formally exonerated from all the accusations made against him by the Duke of Burgundy and that his widow and heir would have 'good and rapid justice'. At that moment John was marching out of Tournai making for Maastricht. A delegation headed by his old adversary Guillaume de Tignonville was sent to convey the Duchess's demands to him and call on him to disperse his army and to submit to the King's justice.[16]

On 23 September 1408 the 8,000-strong army of the Duke of Burgundy and his brother-in-law William Count of Hainaut inflicted a crushing defeat on the men of Liège at the battle of Othée. It was in some ways a re-enactment of the destruction of the men of Ghent at Roosebeke in 1382. The inexperienced townsmen found themselves prevented by their numbers from manoeuvring on the battlefield and crushed in a pincer movement by well-trained and heavily armoured men-at-arms fighting on foot. The bowmen, shooting from the wings, finished them off. Henry lord of Perwez and his nephew the anti-bishop of Liège were both among the dead, along with several thousand of their followers. After the battle the men of Liège submitted to the victors and accepted a humiliating treaty which re-established John of Bavaria as the ruler of their city but placed the principality under the effective control of the Duke of Burgundy and his allies. The battle confirmed John's reputation as a military commander and earned him his nickname 'the Fearless'. It established him as the dominant power in the Low Countries. It also greatly enriched him, for his share of the indemnity paid by the Liègeois, at 110,000 crowns (or 123,750 *livres*), was more than three times the cost of the campaign and left him with a substantial surplus to finance an aggressive return to French politics.[17]

The battle of Othée had an electric effect on the mood in Paris. The first news reached the city at the end of September 1408, followed shortly by reports that the Duke of Burgundy planned to descend on the capital with his army and impose his will on the Queen and the princes. At first they determined to resist. The northern cities were ordered to close their gates against the Duke.

Troops were deployed at the crossings of the Oise and the Aisne. More were summoned from the provinces. Louis of Anjou was marching north to reinforce them with men recruited in Provence. The Duke of Brittany, now playing a dominant role in the princes' counsels, entered into a full military alliance with Bernard of Armagnac who promised 500 men-at-arms and 100 bowmen, more if the situation should require it. 'And we will not enquire whether the war for which these men are needed is just or unjust,' he declared, 'for we will deem it to be just if he and his council have ordained it to be so.' Paris was in a state of great agitation. Rabble-rousers spoke up for the Duke of Burgundy in the streets. Chains were piled up at street corners ready to block the carriageways as soon as the fighting broke out. The Provost of the Merchants, who was thought to be too close to the Queen, received death threats. Beyond the city walls the country sank into anarchy as bandits and Burgundian partisans roamed unhindered across the Île de France looting and burning. The government lived in constant fear of Burgundian infiltration. Strangers were forbidden to enter the city without a pass. Lodging houses were strictly controlled. No one was to have his face covered in the streets. Guards were posted at the gates and bridges and by the strands of the Seine. Armed patrols passed through the city at night.[18]

In about the middle of October 1408 Guillaume de Tignonville and his colleagues returned from their mission to John the Fearless. They brought with them reports of the strength of John's army and his determination to return to Paris. The princes' courage failed them. They were terrified of being caught between the army of the Duke of Burgundy and a Burgundian revolution in the streets of Paris. The Duke of Brittany was anxious to return to his duchy where political problems had been accumulating in his absence. The treasury was empty. At the beginning of November the Queen abandoned the fighting talk of the past weeks and decided to withdraw to the safety of the Loire together with the King, the Dauphin and as much as possible of the royal council. She consulted the princes in the utmost secrecy. No one else was told, not even the King's household staff. The Duke of Burgundy's agents, who quickly discovered the plans, believed, probably rightly, that they were Jean de Montaigu's doing. But the Hôtel Saint-Pol was securely guarded by Breton troops and there was nothing that John could do to stop them. On the afternoon of 3 November the King was carried 'very mad' from his apartments and put into a waiting boat in the Seine. They rowed him upriver beyond the city walls to the abbey of St Victor where the Duke of Brittany, the Duke of Bourbon and Jean de Montaigu met him with 1,500 men-at-arms to escort him on

his journey. Two days later, on the 5th, the Queen, the Dauphin and his wife, the Dukes of Berry and Anjou and the King of Navarre left Paris together by the Porte Saint-Antoine, escorted by the remaining troops in the capital. On 16 November the court established itself at Tours in the ancient citadel standing over the great fortified bridge over the Loire.[19]

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On 4 December 1408 Valentine Visconti Duchess of Orléans died in the castle of Blois at the age of thirty-six, her end hastened by depression and grief. 'Rien ne m'est plus – plus ne m'est rien' was the motto inscribed on the black wall coverings of her apartments after her husband's death. Her own death left the Orléanist cause to be sustained by her three sons, all of whom were still minors, with the support of a tight group of Louis' former retainers and administrators. The great territories which Louis had accumulated in a decade and a half of financial manipulation were much depleted after his death. Important domains in the Gâtinais and Champagne, which had been granted to him for life, reverted to the royal demesne. The county of Périgord was sold in 1408 to raise money. The duchy of Luxembourg, the most important of Louis' strategic territories on France's north-eastern march, had never technically belonged to him. He had held it as the assignee of the creditors of the deposed Emperor Wenceslas. It was annexed by John the Fearless's brother Anthony Duke of Brabant in the course of 1408 and 1409 after a complex deal with the ex-King and his creditors. Most of the miscellaneous rights and alliances, which had depended on Louis' personal position at the heart of the French state fell away. Important allies among the French court nobility who had been drawn to his service by his power and largesse, such as Charles de Savoisy, sloped away after his death and took service with the Duke of Burgundy instead.

Louis' remaining domains were divided between his sons. The oldest of them, Charles Duke of Orléans, inherited the lion's share: the duchy of Orléans and the counties of Blois and Dunois in the Loire valley, the counties of Valois and Beaumont and the barony of Coucy in the north and the Italian territory of Asti which had been part of his mother's dowry. The second son, Philip, became Count of Vertus and took most of Louis' lands in Champagne. The youngest son, John, was allotted some of his father's lands in Normandy and Champagne together with the county of Angoulême. A few days after Valentine's death the King declared Charles of age and the young man stepped hesitantly into his father's shoes. He was just fourteen and wholly without political experience. 'I was young

when my father died,' he recalled many years later, 'and I knew not grief.' His 'quarrel', as contemporaries called it, was as yet hardly his own. In his letters of emancipation the King formally reserved it to himself. For the time being it was Charles VI's councillors and ministers who conducted it on the young Duke's behalf.[20]

They had a poor hand and played it badly. John the Fearless entered Paris on 28 November 1408 accompanied by an armed force of some 2,000 men. The Parisians met him at the Porte Saint-Denis and cheered him through the streets just as they had done in February.[21] They believed that once he took control of the government he would bring an end to the hated war taxes of the past four decades. But the dispersal of the institutions of government, with the council, the royal family and the princes at Tours, and the Parlement and financial administration in Paris, meant that neither side was in effective control of the state. The Duke of Burgundy had the incomparable advantages of holding the capital and controlling the only significant armed force in France. But he needed to bring Charles VI back to Paris where his authority could be deployed in his own interest. The princes at Tours were divided, as they had been ever since the murder of Louis of Orléans. The most outspoken of them was the Duke of Bourbon. He would have imposed harsh terms on John the Fearless and required the leading citizens of Paris to receive the King at their gates with nooses around their necks pleading for forgiveness. At the other extreme stood the King of Navarre and Louis Duke of Anjou. John of Burgundy had won over the first with a promise to restore some of the forfeited lands of his father in Normandy. He had bribed the second by promising him the hand of his daughter Catherine for his heir together with a lavish dowry, which quickly won over the perennially impoverished Louis. Both of them pressed for John's rehabilitation. The remaining princes and councillors were mainly concerned to avoid a civil war, to vindicate the dignity of the Crown and to return to the comforts of Paris. They were also anxious to put an end to the rising tide of disorder in the Île de France where the troops of the Duke of Burgundy and the Count of Hainaut were running amok, burning and looting. All of these objectives, they believed, could be achieved by an act of public contrition on the part of the Duke of Burgundy followed by his banishment from court for a few years. But this was one thing that John the Fearless could never concede. His dilemma was eloquently exposed in a minute of his council. His public position, that he had killed his cousin in the interests of the King and his realm, was not just a question of saving face. It was an essential part of his appeal to the population of Paris and the industrial cities of the north. An apology

or a craven submission would discredit him and demoralise his supporters. As for the proposal to banish him from court, that would be disastrous. He was a prince of the royal blood with every right to participate in the government of France. Better, his councillors thought, to march on Tours and bring the King back to Paris by force.

Negotiations between the two camps had already begun. The Count of Hainaut acted as John's advocate and chief negotiator. His cousin Louis of Bavaria performed the same office for the Queen and the council. Jean II de Montaigu acted as a go-between. John the Fearless made no secret of his hatred for Jean de Montaigu, whom he recognised as the animating force behind the resistance to his ambitions. He openly threatened him with death and at one point refused to receive him. For his part Jean de Montaigu realised that John could not be excluded from power short of war and that the council had no stomach for war. Fearing for his own future if things were allowed to come to a head, he found plenty of reasons for compromise. For nearly two months the delegations passed to and fro between Paris and the Loire. Finally, on about 21 January 1409, agreement was reached. The terms were wholly favourable to John the Fearless. He was required to withdraw from Paris with his troops by the beginning of February. He was then to submit to the King and be reconciled with the house of Orléans at a public ceremony in Chartres cathedral on 9 March. Every detail of the occasion was carefully choreographed and scripted in advance. But the script contained no apology or promise of reparation. To seal the deed Charles of Orléans' brother Philip would be betrothed to one of John's daughters with a large dowry and an annual pension to be provided from the King's funds. Nothing was said about banishing John from court. On the contrary the tacit understanding was that John would resume his place at the heart of the French government.[22]

In 1409 the cathedral of Chartres, dominating the Beauce from the highest point of the town, looked very much as it does today apart from an uncompleted tower and a dense maze of lanes and buildings filling what are now windy open spaces on its west and south sides. On the morning of the day appointed for the Duke of Burgundy's submission the King and Queen were seated on thrones on a raised platform in the nave accompanied by the Dauphin, the royal princes, the leaders of the court nobility and the officers of state. Around the altar stood the remaining councillors of the King, the entire corps of the Parlement and the Chambre des Comptes and the officers and magistrates of the municipality of Paris, all of whom had ridden out from the capital. The Count of Hainaut, who

was responsible for security, had filled the vast darkened nave with soldiers in full armour arrayed as if for battle with their weapons ready. At exactly eleven o'clock the Duke of Burgundy entered by the transept escorted by twenty knights, while Charles of Orléans and his two brothers entered simultaneously by the opposite side. John the Fearless's spokesman was his councillor Jean de Nielles, who had himself been implicated in the murder of Louis of Orléans. Addressing the King from the prepared script, he declared that his master had ordered the assassination for the good of the Crown and the realm. John expressed no regret for that, the spokesman intoned, but he did regret the anger and distress that it had caused to Charles VI. Therefore he had come before the King to recover his favour and declare his intention to serve and obey him in all things. The Queen, the Dauphin and the princes came forward to beg the King to pardon the Duke and restore him to favour, which the King graciously agreed to do. Then, turning to the Orléans brothers as they approached from the transept, the King declared that John wished them to banish from their hearts all the anger and resentment that they had felt for the murder of their father. 'Yes, good cousins,' said John, 'I ask this of you.' The Orléans princes were weeping. They remained resolutely silent. Only when the King then ordered them to pardon their father's killer did they reply, agreeing to do so 'in accordance with your orders … for on no account would we wish to incur your displeasure'. Charles VI then told them to put aside all rancour and never again to allow the fate of Louis of Orléans to come between them and the Duke of Burgundy. Finally Jean de Montaigu approached John the Fearless and presented him with the engrossed copy of the treaty which John solemnly ratified. Later that day the royal council issued fresh letters of pardon.

Writing to his officials at Lille, John the Fearless expressed his entire satisfaction with the way that things had gone. As well he might. He had not apologised or acknowledged any wrongdoing. He had accepted no punishment for his crime. He had conceded nothing. In the same letter John declared that his satisfaction was shared by everyone else in the cathedral, but he can hardly have believed this himself. The peace was a travesty. It had been imposed on the King's weak, divided and frightened councillors and they had in turn imposed it on the young princes of the house of Orléans. The discontent was audible in the cathedral. The Orléans brothers returned to Blois with their father's councillors and retainers, resentful and humiliated. John himself left Chartres as soon as the rites were over without even sharing the traditional meal and cup of spiced wine. The clerk of the Parlement wrote in the margin of his

register ‘Peace, peace and yet no peace’. The Duke of Burgundy’s jester had a better phrase, which stuck. He called it the *paix fourrée*, the hollow peace. The charade at Chartres marked for Charles and Philip of Orléans the start of a public career dedicated to the destruction of the house of Burgundy.[23]

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The King returned to Paris on 17 March 1409 to an ecstatic welcome with banquets and street parties. The Queen followed him a few days later, making her own theatrical entry surrounded by ladies in white robes. The Duke of Burgundy had succeeded in bringing the government back to Paris. But it was several months before he was able to control it. Charles VI shortly succumbed to his old illness and, apart from a brief interval in late May and June, was incapacitated until August. In accordance with the successive royal ordinances regulating the conduct of business in his absence his authority was vested in the Queen. She was bitterly resentful of the ‘hollow peace’ of Chartres and had no intention of sharing her power with the Duke of Burgundy if she could avoid it. On 24 March, within a week of her return, she and her brother entered into a formal treaty with John the Fearless and his brother-in-law William of Hainaut in which they acknowledged her custody of the royal children and her right to conduct the government during Charles’s ‘absences’ and swore to give effect to her decisions. Her only promise to them apart from a rather vague profession of goodwill was that they would get enough notice of council meetings to enable them to attend. Even that was of limited value, for the council was still full of Orléanists and Isabelle herself shortly withdrew with the Dauphin to Melun, thus making the transaction of important business all but impossible. In the capital the civil service handled the daily business of government according to its familiar routines, opposing its enormous force of inertia to John’s ambitions. Meanwhile John’s reform programme stalled. His finances were deteriorating fast. He had no access to the royal treasury. He had borrowed heavily to fund his military expenditure. By February 1409 his credit was exhausted and he was paying interest of about 40 per cent on new borrowings. In April he was forced to suspend indefinitely the payment of pensions to his servants and retainers.[24]

In the middle of August 1409 the King recovered his wits and remained capable of conducting business for the next six weeks. The Duke of Burgundy, who had been away attending to the affairs of Flanders, returned to Paris at once, determined to use the King’s moments of sanity to break the logjam and impose his will on the

rambling institutions of the state. John's main ally on the council was the King of Navarre, who was short of money and willing to lend his support in return for a share of the spoils. The two of them resolved upon a show of force to overawe the court and the administration and impose John's programme. They agreed at a convenient moment to arrest 'certain malefactors, plotters and traitors' who seemed likely to obstruct their plans. They brought troops into Paris in preparation for the moment. They took into their confidence the royal Provost Pierre des Essarts, an old Burgundian retainer. On 7 October 1409 Jean II de Montaigu was arrested by the Provost in the street as he was walking to Mass. 'How dare you lay hands on me,' he said to the Provost as he was led away. Montaigu had powerful friends, notably the Queen and the Duke of Berry, and he counted on their protection. But his patrons could do nothing for him. He was taken to the Châtelet and charged with plotting with Louis of Orléans to prolong the King's illness. After a perfunctory trial he was condemned to death by a special commission packed with creatures of the Duke of Burgundy.

His execution on 17 October was carried out with a theatricality that was designed to shock. The condemned man was taken to the market at Les Halles seated high on a tumbril dressed in his red and white livery colours with a golden spur on one foot and a silver one on the other, preceded by two trumpeters. He made a courageous speech to the crowd in which he admitted to having wasted royal funds but, pointing to his broken wrists and mutilated genitals, declared that only torture had made him admit to more than that. After his head had been struck off it was paraded about the market on a lance and his body hung out for the vultures at the public gibbet at Montfaucon. The event was intended to terrorise the remaining Orléanists in the administration and no doubt did so.

The net had already been cast wider. A warrant was issued for the arrest of Montaigu's brother the Archbishop of Sens. The elder Jean was away on diplomatic business when they came for him. But he escaped from his custodians and fled to the protection of Charles of Orléans at Blois. The third brother, Gérard de Montaigu Bishop of Paris, was dismissed from all his positions and sought asylum with relatives in Savoy. There followed a purge of the senior officials of the financial services of the Crown. They included both the treasurers of France, both of the war treasurers, the heads of the financial departments of the royal household, all of the *généraux des finances*, all but one of the presidents and councillors of the Chambre des Comptes and a large number of their subordinates who had crossed the Duke of Burgundy over the years. All of them were dismissed. Some of them were arrested and shut in the Louvre

and other state prisons. Some went into hiding. Some fled before the sergeants came for them. Some were released after paying heavy fines. A handful were later reinstated.[25]

In an atmosphere heavy with fear the Duke of Burgundy now embarked with a vengeance on his programme of reform. He told the council that in his view the catastrophic state of the government's finances was entirely due to the dishonesty and wastefulness of the officials charged with their administration. A start had already been made on reducing their numbers and some grants at the expense of the royal demesne had been revoked. On 20 October 1409, after a meeting of the council at the Hôtel Saint-Pol extending over several days, an ordinance was drawn up which inaugurated a root and branch reform of the administration. It recited the long and familiar catalogue of ills: profligate grants, appropriation of revenues by local noblemen, excessive numbers of officials, inflated salaries and perquisites, bureaucratic incompetence, corruption and fraud, inadequate records and accounts. All of this was true, but it was not the whole truth. It left out of account the most important factor of all, the pillaging of the state by the princes. A standing commission of twenty persons, most of them active Burgundian partisans, was appointed to examine the accounts of officials throughout France, to punish and dismiss miscreants and to appoint new men in their place. Pierre des Essarts was appointed as president of the *généraux des finances* responsible for the administration of the *aides* and was a member of the standing commission. He became the dominant officer in the financial administration. Most of the dismissed officials were replaced by neutral functionaries or reliable Burgundians. The wholesale change of personnel in the financial departments was extremely disruptive. But in one respect it was immediately effective. It finally opened the royal coffers to the Duke of Burgundy. Some of his arrears were settled. His expenses in bringing troops to Paris were reimbursed along with those of the King of Navarre. Lavish grants of money were made to him. In the last three months of 1409 John was promised nearly 150,000 francs from the Crown, a figure comparable to the payments made to his father in the last year of his life. Owing to the familiar fiscal problems of the French state only about a quarter of this was actually paid. But in the course of the following year John's appetite increased. He exacted promises from the Crown amounting to no less than 178,000 francs, more than 90 per cent of which was paid.[26]

John the Fearless's power, however, still rested on nothing more than the swords of his soldiers and the support of the population of

Paris. He was uncomfortably reminded of the fact when the Parlement and the Chambre des Comptes declined to register the reform ordinance of 20 October, presumably on the ground of insufficient evidence of royal consent, just as they had resisted every previous attempt to reduce their numbers or their pay. The Duke therefore set about finding a better legal basis for his regime and putting it on a more permanent footing. The Orléanists on the royal council had stayed away since the execution of Jean de Montaigu for fear of meeting the same fate. Others who were thought to be unreliable, such as the Dukes of Berry and Bourbon, were marginalised by the simple device of failing to give them notice of meetings. The Queen, who remained obstinately at Melun, was less easily circumvented for while her husband remained incapacitated nothing of importance could be done without her approval. But Isabelle was venal and in the course of November 1409 John bought her off. He visited her at Melun. He promised her her own financial administration and a large increase in the revenues assigned to her. In return Isabelle agreed to transfer her powers to her eldest son, the Dauphin Louis of Guyenne, and to deliver him into John's hands to serve as a figurehead for his government.

At the beginning of December 1409 the King recovered his senses and John seized the opportunity to put this plan into effect. Charles was prevailed upon to issue an ordinance declaring Louis to be of age and discharging the Queen as his guardian. Isabelle returned to the capital from Melun shortly before Christmas bringing her son with her. On 27 December the Dauphin, a shy, spoiled and sickly child of twelve, was brought into the presence of the King and a crowd of princes, nobles and functionaries in the hall of the castle of Vincennes. The King went through the motions of offering the guardianship of the young prince to the Duke of Berry as the senior royal prince. When he declined in accordance with a script ordained long in advance, the role was accepted by John the Fearless. All of these arrangements were laid before a great council of the leading noblemen of the realm and the judges of the Parlement which met in the Palace on the Cité on New Year's Eve. They were approved without difficulty by an assembly dominated by the Duke of Burgundy's followers in a city full of his soldiers and partisans.

The King's spokesman then announced the next stage of the Burgundian programme of reform. The pensions of the princes were to be cancelled and their right to appropriate the proceeds of royal taxation in their domains revoked. The various commissions charged with reforming the civil service were to be extended. The Dauphin was nominated as president of the royal council and regent

for his father during the latter's 'absences'. No one imagined that Louis of Guyenne was actually going to direct the affairs of the realm. The Duke of Burgundy had power to appoint and dismiss his officers as he saw fit. His friends and clients filled Louis' household and secretariat and administered his revenues and domains. Louis' marshal was the reliable Burgundian partisan Jacques d'Heilly and his chancellor was none other than Jean de Nielles, who had served as John's spokesman at the ceremony in Chartres cathedral in March.[27]

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The strangest announcement made at the great council was that the government intended to reopen the war with England. This was presumably discussed in advance with the leading men present, but it must have come as a surprise to everyone else. For the past two years relations with England had slipped off the agenda. The truces agreed at the end of 1407 had been regularly renewed. The current agreement was due to expire on 1 May 1410. The separate commercial treaty between England and Flanders had been renewed for three years in June 1408. All of these agreements had been endorsed by the French royal council even while it was dominated by Orléanists. The result had been a fragile but durable peace. Piracy, although it never entirely ceased, was reduced to manageable levels and was no longer promoted by either government. The only notable fighting on the marches had occurred in the summer of 1409, when the Constable Charles d'Albret had conducted a brief campaign against the principal Anglo-Gascon garrisons in Périgord which appears to have been undertaken on the initiative of the communities of the province, not the council in Paris. Albret laid siege to the castle of Moruscle in northern Périgord, which was controlled by the English King's seneschal Gaillard de Durfort, but failed to take it. The Constable's solitary success was at Limeuil, which was recaptured together with its satellites and its troublesome captain Jean de Limeuil carried off as a prisoner to Paris. This was the only notable action which the French government took against the English in the five years which followed the truces of 1407. Even the English appear to have regarded the status of these garrisons as ambiguous and there is no trace of any protest.[28]

It is clear from the instructions given to the English negotiators at successive diplomatic conferences that they would have preferred a more permanent agreement with France, either a general peace or a reaffirmation of the long truce of 1396. The old project of a royal marriage alliance was canvassed several times but nothing ever

came of it. The main problems were the domestic preoccupations of the French princes and the constant changes of personnel on the French side. The Duke of Berry, who had been mainly responsible for the conduct of relations with England since the death of Louis of Orléans, was excluded from power from the autumn of 1409 onward. In October, at the height of the tensions provoked by the Burgundian purges in Paris, an important French embassy led by Jean de Montaigu's brother the Archbishop of Sens was waiting at Amiens for the opening of what promised to be the most significant diplomatic conference since Henry IV's accession. Henry IV's Beaufort half-brothers had been appointed to lead the English delegation. The conference never happened. There was a delay while the parties argued about the venue. Before this question could be resolved the Archbishop fled on the news of his brother's arrest and one of the other members of the French delegation was arrested on orders sent from Paris. Shortly afterwards a herald arrived in England from France to announce that the conference had been cancelled.[29]

When at the great council John the Fearless announced his intention of making war on England, this incident was given as one of the reasons. The others were equally specious. Reports were said to have been received of the recruitment of an army across the Channel to invade France. This was a fiction as the French public soon realised. To this was added the familiar litany of complaints about Henry IV's seizure of the English throne, the subsequent breaches of the truce and the continued imprisonment of the young King of Scotland. What lay behind the announcement? It is difficult to be sure but it appears to have been a charade designed to build loyalty to the new regime, to promote unity among a fractious political class and perhaps to justify fresh demands for taxation by a government whose leaders were nominally committed to reducing taxes. Those present were invited to consider how the coming war might be paid for. But in the event nothing more was heard of the proposed war. No plans were made for fighting it and the announcement was swiftly overtaken by the collapse of the understandings that the princes had patched up among themselves in December 1409. Less than a fortnight into the new year the Admiral of France, the loyal Burgundian Jacques de Châtillon, met the English King's half-brother Sir Thomas Beaufort on the march of Calais and agreed that a fresh diplomatic conference would be convened to renew the current truce. The whole business was testimony to the incoherence of French policy-making during the tumults provoked by John the Fearless's coup in Paris.[30]

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The Christmas and New Year celebrations of 1409 were of great splendour the like of which had not been seen at court for many years. They were held in the vast Salle Saint-Louis in the Palace on the Cité. The King presided in robes of gold cloth sewn with pearls. Orchestras played and choirs sang. Charles was in excellent form. The princes left their mansions and flocked to his table. They dined off gold and silver plate, once pledged to Jean de Montaigu and now recovered from the disgraced minister's stores. The Duke of Burgundy attended the festivities with a larger entourage than the whole of the rest of the court. In the traditional exchange of *étrennes* (or New Year gifts), John presented his uncles and cousins with jewelled mason's levels and plumb lines to symbolise his plan to straighten out the crooked ways of the royal administration. It was the sort of conceit that John had always liked.[31]

No one was deceived. The facade of unity achieved at the great council collapsed within days of the festivities. John the Fearless had obtained effective control of the state but it had cost him the acquiescence of the princes. It began to dawn on these men that the Burgundian reform programme would deprive them of the easy access to royal funds that they had enjoyed for years and that John and his intimates were likely to be the only gainers. The shock of Jean de Montaigu's brutal end still reverberated. The great minister had been little loved but he had for years eased the passage of royal revenues into the coffers of the princes and they had repaid his complaisance by protecting him against his many enemies. They had not been consulted before his arrest and their protests at his destruction had been brushed aside. Some of them ostentatiously boycotted the court. The Constable, who had married his daughter to a son of Jean de Montaigu, stayed away throughout the autumn. The Duke of Brittany and the Count of Armagnac left Paris before the great council. The Duke of Orléans and his brother declined to appear in Paris at all. The Duke of Berry stayed for the great council and played the role in it that had been written for him by John the Fearless. But he took the proceedings very ill and quickly regretted his acquiescence. Many of the disgraced financial officials had been his protégés. He regarded their dismissal as a personal insult. He resented the power conferred on Pierre des Essarts, whom he regarded as an upstart fanatic. He protested loudly at his own exclusion from the council. Finally he left in high dudgeon for his domains at the beginning of January 1410, followed by the Duke of Bourbon. His grievances were shared in different degrees by the other royal princes. 'We are the closest kinsmen of the King and

ought to enjoy the highest esteem in his counsels,' they protested according to a Burgundian propagandist; 'and yet we are never called to his council where the Duke of Burgundy ordains the business as he pleases.' Even the King of Navarre is reported to have wondered whether he had made the right choice. John did not care. He had neither time nor inclination to build up support among the princes in the way that his father had done. He showed no interest in sharing power with a group of men for whom he had nothing but contempt. This was foolish. The breach with Jean de Berry was particularly unwise. Berry was a manipulable old man who wanted nothing more than a quiet life, an ample income and an honourable position in the state. He could have been bought off as easily as the Queen. Writing a few weeks after this an Italian merchant in Paris told his correspondent in Lucca that only three things were needed to make the princes declare war on John the Fearless: unity of purpose, leadership and money. They were shortly to acquire all three.[32]

Charles of Orléans had passed most of the autumn at Blois building up his support. In the weeks after the great council he entered into formal treaties with the Duke of Bourbon's heir, John Count of Clermont, and with the great southern feudatory Bernard Count of Armagnac. The three of them together with the Count of Alençon and the Constable Charles d'Albret met at the Duke of Berry's castle at Mehun-sur-Yèvre to plan their next step, and again in the presence of Berry himself at Angers. At these meetings there was a sharp division about methods. Some of the princes wanted to prevail on the King to bring John the Fearless to justice. Others had given up all hope of decisive action by the King and wanted to take matters into their own hands. Their plan was to launch an out-and-out war against the recalcitrant Duke of Burgundy. Ultimately it was this second group which prevailed. The key figure among them was the Count of Armagnac. His energy, ruthlessness and large military following supplied much that had hitherto been lacking to the cause of Louis of Orléans' sons.

In April 1410 all the leaders of the anti-Burgundian coalition met secretly at Gien, a walled town by the Loire on the confines of Berry and the Orléanais. The Duke of Berry presided. The others present were Charles of Orléans, John Duke of Brittany, the Counts of Clermont, Armagnac and Alençon and Charles d'Albret. Jean de Montaigu's brothers, the Archbishop of Sens and the Bishop of Paris, also attended. The retinues of these gorgeous personages could hardly be concealed in a small town like Gien, and news of the conference quickly leaked out. Charles of Navarre and the Queen's brother Louis of Bavaria, both of them now allies of the Duke of

Burgundy, turned up uninvited to find out what was going on. But they were barred from the chamber where the princes were meeting. Inside, the Duke of Berry was finding it hard to get agreement. Finally, on 15 April 1410, the princes entered into a military alliance with a view to taking the government out of the hands of the Duke of Burgundy. Between them they agreed to raise an army of at least 5,000 men-at-arms and 4,000 bowmen, more if necessary. Three days later, on 18 April, Charles of Orléans, a widower since the death of Isabelle of France the year before, was betrothed to the seventeen-year-old Bonne of Armagnac, Bernard's eldest daughter. The marriage, which would be celebrated in August, sealed the alliance of the houses of Armagnac and Orléans which was to be the foundation of what would soon be called the 'Armagnac' party.[33]

Not everyone at Gien was content with these arrangements. Even those who attached their seals to the treaty did so for a variety of reasons which would one day be a fruitful source of discord. The Duke of Brittany never had any real commitment to the Orléanist cause. He had joined the league because Jean de Berry had persuaded him that if the Duke of Burgundy was allowed to consolidate his power in Paris he would use it to depose him from the ducal throne and install the Count of Penthièvre in his place. Moreover, although all the signatories were now agreed on the use of force, they were divided about its objects. There were those such as the Duke of Berry whose main concern was to compel John the Fearless to share power with them; and others such as Bernard of Armagnac and the Counts of Clermont and Alençon who were more interested in avenging the injury done to the house of Orléans in the Rue Vieille du Temple and were determined to exclude the Duke of Burgundy from power altogether. The Duke of Bourbon had declined to attend the conference. He was a profoundly cautious man who had lived through the civil wars of the 1350s and 1360s. When his support was informally promised by his son the Duke disavowed him. 'You are a fool,' he told Charles of Orléans' emissary who came to find him at his castle at Montbrison beneath the mountains of Forez. 'You cannot imagine what it is to embark upon a civil war. These things are quickly begun but they are slow to heal.' Besides, he added, war was costly and the league's members could not afford it. Charles d'Albret attended the conference at Gien but declined to join the league. His reasons are not recorded. He certainly sympathised with the grievances of the Orléans princes, but as the first officer of state and a southerner with no power base of his own in Paris he had good reason to tread carefully. Both men would later relent and support the league. But

neither of them had his heart in it.[34]

The leaguers' original plan had been to assemble their army at Poitiers on 12 June and march on Paris. In fact the collection of money and troops took longer than that and they did not meet until early July. By then the situation had changed. John the Fearless had summoned large forces to Paris from his domains in Burgundy and Artois and had called on his allies in the Low Countries for support. By July he had some 6,000 men-at-arms and 3,000 bowmen encamped around the capital or on their way. He had also succeeded in detaching John of Brittany from the league. He bought him off by negotiating a non-aggression pact and settling the claims of his ward Olivier Count of Penthièvre. As a result John failed to turn up at Poitiers, sending neither troops nor excuses. This was a heavy blow to the league since along with Bernard of Armagnac John V had been in a position to provide the strongest military support. The remaining princes agreed to reinforce their contingents urgently and to open their campaign at Tours on 15 August. Six weeks of frenetic fundraising and recruitment followed while Charles VI addressed repeated orders to the leaguers, dictated by the Duke of Burgundy, to lay down their arms or be treated as traitors.

On 18 August 1410 there was a tense meeting in the hall of Jean de Berry's palace at Poitiers between the emissaries of the government in Paris and the leaders of the league. The government's spokesman was Guillaume de Tignonville. He had by now made his peace with the Duke of Burgundy and thrown in his lot with him. Ranged before him were all the adherents to the league: the Duke of Berry, the Counts of Armagnac, Alençon and Clermont, two other counts and twenty-six prominent lay noblemen in addition to a formidable contingent of prelates led by the Archbishops of Rouen and Bourges. Guillaume de Tignonville urged them to lay down their arms. He invited the Duke of Berry to resume his accustomed place on the royal council. Resort to force against the King, he said, was unprecedented. It could only draw in foreign mercenaries and lead to the pillaging and destruction of France. Even if the leaguers won they would soon find themselves prisoners of their own soldiers. All of this was good sense. But Tignonville was wasting his breath. Jean de Berry's long-standing chancellor, Guillaume de Boisratier Archbishop of Bourges, replied with a speech full of courtly nothings. The Duke of Berry, he said, would send a more considered reply from Tours. As the royal emissaries left the princes published a manifesto in which they tried to counter the widespread belief that they were only out for power. Not at all, they said. Their intention was to march on Paris to

discuss the reform of the state with Charles VI. The Parisians did not believe it. They were making ready to defend their city. All the gates on the left bank quarters were walled up except three. Guards were placed on the walls and gates. Blockships were sunk in the Seine. John the Fearless's allies arrived with more troops from the Low Countries. The *arrière-ban* was proclaimed throughout France. According to the chronicler Monstrelet, who claimed to have the figures from the muster rolls, John the Fearless had recruited 15,000 men-at-arms and 17,000 bowmen and infantry to defend the capital. The true figure may have been as much as half of that.[35]

The princes of the league assembled with their troops at Tours at the end of August 1410. From there they marched to Chartres and issued another manifesto addressed to the principal towns, prelates and noblemen of France. This document set out to steal the Duke of Burgundy's clothes. The princes laid out the ills of the state: the diversion of royal revenues, the collapse of justice, the sinfulness of the royal court and the Duke of Burgundy's violent grip on power. They proclaimed their credentials as reformers and their intention of 'rescuing' the King and the Dauphin. There are no reliable records of their strength but it may well have been even larger than the great horde assembled by the Duke of Burgundy. Bernard of Armagnac appeared with an estimated 4,000 southerners. Some of the princes are said to have brought even more. The Duke of Bourbon, one of the wisest and most experienced heads among the higher nobility, had died at the age of seventy-three a fortnight earlier, allowing his violent and impetuous heir John Count of Clermont to bring the whole resources of his family to the side of the league. The Duke of Brittany swayed uneasily between the two camps. He told Bernard of Armagnac, who came to plead with him at Nantes, that John the Fearless had slandered him but otherwise had done him no harm. He ended up by supporting both sides. His brother, the eighteen-year-old Arthur Count of Richemont, led a force of Bretons to join the army of the league, ostensibly as a personal venture of his own. Another Breton contingent was sent to fight for the Duke of Burgundy under the command of the third brother, Gilles. The Constable was another trimmer who tried to keep in with both sides. He had until recently been sitting with the Duke of Burgundy on the council in Paris. He was eventually persuaded to join the army at Chartres, but remained in contact with the Burgundians in Paris. As for the others, their relations were already becoming strained as the imminent showdown began to expose their differences. The Count of Armagnac, much the ablest soldier in the princes' army but tactless and assertive, was already beginning to grate on his colleagues.[36]

The leaders of the league were experienced enough to realise that they were unlikely to capture Paris by force against the combined opposition of the Parisians and the army of the Duke of Burgundy. Their object was to negotiate with a large enough armed force at their backs to be able to bargain with him on equal terms. They sent a delegation from Chartres to Paris to open talks. The emissaries, led by Jean de Berry's chancellor Guillaume de Boisratier, appeared before the royal council in the second week of September. Charles VI had been in sound mind for two months, an unusually long period, and for the first time in years was taking an active line of his own. He appears to have had little understanding of the underlying issues. But he had a lively sense of the dignity of his office and was outraged by the idea of his closest relatives and councillors taking up arms against him. Boisratier completely misjudged the situation. He brought no proposals at all. When he appeared before the King he merely repeated the Duke of Berry's demand that he and his confederates should be admitted to Paris with their army in order to 'discuss' the reform of the realm with the King. Charles rejected this suggestion without even taking the traditional adjournment to consult his council. He told the Archbishop that he would not receive the leaguers until they laid down their arms. Then he curtly dismissed him. The Duke of Berry had reached Étampes when he encountered the ambassadors returning from their mission and received their report. He simply could not believe that the King had meant it. He sent them back to repeat the same message. This time they do not seem even to have been admitted to the King's presence. Charles VI had the famous red banner of Saint-Denis, the *Oriflamme*, traditionally unfurled at moments of national crisis, brought to him in Paris and had it proclaimed through the capital that he would carry it against the leaguers at the head of his army.[37]

In the middle of September 1410 the 'Armagnacs', as people were already beginning to call them, arrived at Montlhéry, a powerful royal fortress on the Orléans road fifteen miles south of Paris. Here they paused to wait for Arthur de Richemont's Breton contingent and to make another attempt at negotiation. Several days of fruitless talks followed under the auspices of the Queen in the magnificent Montaigu mansion at Marcoussis which was nearby. It fell to the University of Paris to attempt to broker a compromise. Most of its doctors and masters were heart and soul with the Duke of Burgundy. But the University was divided by Jean Petit's bold defence of tyrannicide, which many of them suspected to be theologically unsound, perhaps even heretical. And, like many others in the capital, the University's members were frightened by

the intransigence of the parties and the rising tide of anarchy in the Île de France. They proposed to both sides that all the royal princes should withdraw to their domains, leaving the government in the hands of a caretaker administration staffed by the Crown's permanent officials. In due course, they suggested, the Estates-General should be summoned to propose more permanent arrangements. The Duke of Berry was benign but non-committal when these proposals were presented to him. He probably thought that he could afford this ambiguity because the Burgundians would reject them anyway.

In fact they did not. On 24 September 1410 the Duke of Burgundy and his allies gave their answer at a carefully staged public ceremony in the presence of the King and the Dauphin in the Palace on the Cité. Their spokesman was the King of Navarre, a shrewd politician and one of the more moderate voices in the Burgundian camp. The Duke of Burgundy, he said, recognised that he was not strong enough to govern France alone. He and his supporters among the princes were willing to withdraw from Paris and to renounce their personal pensions from the royal treasury as well as the *aides* which they levied for their own benefit in their domains, but only on condition that their adversaries did the same. He accepted the proposal to leave the future shape of the King's government to be decided by an Estates-General. The King of Navarre's declaration was recorded and carried to the leaguers at Montlhéry by the Queen. The Duke of Berry had been wrong-footed. The truth was that there was not much for him in the University's plan, for all its apparent even-handedness. He had made it perfectly clear that his main grievance was his exclusion from the counsels of the King, which would continue indefinitely under these proposals. The caretaker government was likely to dominated by Burgundians since most of Berry's protégés and all prominent Orléanists had been dismissed from the higher ranks of the civil service. As for the proposal to summon the Estates-General, these unwieldy gatherings had in the past simply provided a platform for demagogues. John the Fearless, with his strong position in the northern towns, would be in his element. Still, the Duke of Berry did not reject the University's proposals outright. But he put off his answer, playing for time and pressing his military advantages. On 6 October 1410 he advanced from Montlhéry with his allies and established his headquarters in his luxurious mansion at Bicêtre on the south side of the city. His army spread itself out among the suburban villages and in the gardens and vineyards which covered what are now the bleak industrial suburbs of modern Paris. Charles VI responded by declaring the leaders of the league to be enemies and traitors and

decreeing the confiscation of their assets.[38]

The league's military position was not nearly as strong as the Duke of Berry thought it was. John the Fearless had troops on the walls and gates of southern Paris and at all the towns and bridges of the Seine. The result was that the Armagnacs were unable to penetrate north of the river and found themselves hemmed into a narrow arc of territory south-west of the city between the Orléans road and the Eure at Chartres. Much of this region was heavily wooded and the rest was incapable of supporting such a dense concentration of troops. They had to forage as much as fifty miles from the city walls. They rapidly exhausted the local food supplies. The Burgundians' control of the Seine prevented them from bringing in more by water. These logistical difficulties were aggravated by the early onset of winter. October was wet and unseasonally cold. It was not until the end of that month, when Arthur de Richemont joined the leaguers with 2,000 Breton troops, that the league succeeded in occupying the fortified bridge at Saint-Cloud downstream of Paris and gained a foothold on the right bank. But by then it was too late. The Armagnac army was starving.

The city's food position was better but not much better. As always in times of crisis its population was swollen by footloose soldiers, adventurers and refugees, extra mouths for whom food had to be found. Most of the city's grain had traditionally come from the Beauce, which was cut off by the Armagnacs. The city was still accessible from the north but even there the government was rapidly losing control. A large troop of Brabanters sent by John the Fearless's brother Anthony had been stationed in the walled abbey-town of Saint-Denis to serve as a strategic reserve and to guard John's communications with the north. They turned it into a base for looting, emptying out the abbey's storehouses and granges and breaking into farms and cottages for miles around. They were joined by hordes of soldiers from Lorraine, Germany and the Low Countries, drawn by the prospect of pillage in one of the richest agricultural regions in Europe. Prices in the city's markets rose steeply. Both sides were running out of money. The Duke of Orléans had borrowed heavily from Parisian money-changers during the summer, and by September his credit was exhausted. He sold off immense quantities of his parents' jewellery for ready cash, raising more than 24,000 *livres* from this source alone. John the Fearless borrowed from whoever would lend: his family, the Queen, the chapter of Notre-Dame, various Parisian merchants, the Italian communities, the Jews. He drew nearly 130,000 francs from the royal treasury. When that was exhausted he resorted to forced loans, then to the King's jewels and finally to a poll tax of six *écus* a

head on the population of Paris. By the end of October his troops were no longer being paid. Whatever discipline had been maintained to date began to break down. Neither side was capable of carrying on the fight any longer.[39]

On 2 November 1410 agreement was reached between representatives of all the principals after a series of conferences in the Duke of Berry's mansion at Bicêtre. The terms were based on the proposals which the University had made six weeks before. The princes on both sides agreed to disband their troops and withdraw from Paris. They were not to return to court unless summoned by royal letters patent approved by the council, and they were not to try to get such letters issued. None of them was to attack the territory or slander the good name of the others until at least the spring of 1412. The government was to be carried on in the meantime by the King while he was capable of doing it and in his 'absences' by the Dauphin. Each of the princes was allowed one nominee on the council. But most of its membership was to comprise men with no links to either side. A face-saving formula was devised to deal with the critical question of the guardianship of the young Dauphin. John the Fearless agreed to share his responsibilities as guardian with the Duke of Berry, but Berry agreed that in practice he would not interfere. The completion of the prince's education was to be entrusted to two knights, one appointed by each of them. Finally the Duke of Berry undertook to dissolve the league of Gien and ally himself with John the Fearless.[40]

The Duke of Burgundy duly withdrew to Meaux on 8 November 1410 and the Duke of Berry simultaneously withdrew an equal distance to Dourdan. As soon as each had verified the departure of the other they returned to their own domains. The armies were disbanded and left, pursued by the curses of the population. Those who had been stationed within the city walls left without their pay and with little or no booty. Some of them were even made to leave their weapons behind as security for the debts they had run up in the city. The Brabanters who had occupied Saint-Denis departed with a wagon train of looted goods taken from the villages north of the city. But many of the mercenary captains whom the Armagnacs had hired did not withdraw and continued their looting through the winter. Some of these were rounded up by the new Provost of Paris. Their captains were hanged at the public gibbet at Montfaucon and their followers whipped through the streets or drowned in the Seine. But most of them remained in the field, preying on supplies and travellers bound for the capital and prolonging the insecurity of the northern and eastern provinces.[41]

The peace of Bicêtre was as hollow as that of Chartres. It was the Duke of Berry's peace. Charles of Orléans and his brothers never accepted it and had not the slightest intention of observing it. Nor did those of their allies, principally the new Duke of Bourbon and the Counts of Armagnac and Alençon, for whom the main issue had always been retribution for the murder in the Rue Vieille du Temple. Even as they sealed it these men knew that it was in reality no more than a truce which would freeze the political situation until hostilities could conveniently be resumed. On the eve of its execution they had solemnly renewed the promises that they had made to each other at Gien and declared their continuing determination to deal with the Duke of Burgundy by force.

On 8 November 1410, the day that the princes left Paris, Charles VI relapsed once more into his old illness. For the next five months the Dauphin Louis served as the nominal head of state and the Duke of Burgundy as the effective one. The new royal council, which was selected by an impartial commission of 'wise men', represented a rough balance between Burgundians and Orléanists. But it was the Burgundian councillors who dominated because their allies controlled Paris, the Dauphin and most of the civil service. Louis of Guyenne was lodged in the Louvre, where access to him was strictly controlled by Enguerrand de Bournonville, the Burgundian captain of his personal guard. The offices of state continued to operate as they had always done but in an atmosphere heavy with the belligerent Burgundian sentiments of the population of Paris. John the Fearless maintained his grip on the capital from afar. Pierre des Essarts had been dismissed as Provost a few days before the peace in order to ease the path of compromise, but he was replaced by another committed Burgundian partisan. The Burgundians duly summoned the Estates of the whole of France to meet in Paris in the spring. With his rhetorical skills and his popular programme of administrative reform and tax reductions there was every reason to believe that John the Fearless would dominate its deliberations.[42]

*

The divisions within the league of Gien were shortly to be cruelly exposed. Jean de Croy was one of the Duke of Burgundy's closest councillors and collaborators. He was widely (and probably correctly) thought to have been involved in the decision to order the murder of Louis of Orléans. On 30 January 1411, as he rode through the Orléanais on a mission to the Duke of Berry, he was captured on the road by servants of Charles of Orléans and taken into Orléans. There he was brutally tortured to make him admit to complicity in the crime. When he admitted nothing they took him to

Charles's castle at Blois and threw him into a dungeon, where he was held in foul conditions for more than year. The incident was a serious breach of the peace of Bicêtre. The Dukes of Berry and Burgundy both reacted furiously. John the Fearless, who was in Flanders, threatened to go to war and began to raise money for an army. Jean de Berry threatened to treat Charles as an enemy.[43]

The row forced Charles of Orléans to bring forward his military plans. He embarked on a fresh round of borrowing, selling and pledging more jewellery. He renewed his alliances with the Duke of Bourbon and the Counts of Armagnac and Alençon. They began to raise troops in their domains. Arthur de Richemont promised to bring reinforcements from Brittany. At the same time Charles of Orléans made contact with a new ally, John the Fearless's most persistent enemy in his Burgundian domains, Louis de Chalon Count of Tonnerre. The county of Tonnerre, a dependency of the duchy of Burgundy, had recently been confiscated by John's order on account of its owner's kidnapping of one of the Duchess's maids of honour. Rich, impulsive and aggressive, Louis de Chalon was to prove a valuable source of military support in the Duke of Burgundy's rear.[44]

By March 1411 a coherent plan of campaign had been worked out at Blois between Charles of Orléans and the Constable Charles d'Albret. They and their allies had learned something from their humiliations of the previous autumn. They were determined to take the field before John the Fearless could gather his strength. And this time they would avoid being trapped south of the Seine and starved into submission. Their plan was to establish themselves north of Paris and cut off John the Fearless in Flanders and Artois from his supporters in the capital. To do this it would be necessary to concentrate troops on the march of Picardy and in the valley of the Oise. The task was confided to the Duke of Bourbon and Charles of Orléans' brother Philip Count of Vertus, now embarking on his first military campaign at the age of fourteen. At the end of March Philip was sent north with 600 men-at-arms. He crossed the Seine near Mantes at the beginning of April and established himself in the Orléanist fortress of Coucy in the northern Valois. The Duke of Bourbon, accompanied by a 'fine company of men-at-arms with lances as thick as a man's thigh', crossed the estuary of the Seine near Lillebonne on boats and barges seized in the river and entered Clermont-en-Beauvaisis at about the same time. On 6 April John the Fearless's councillors in Paris estimated the combined strength of Vertus and Bourbon at about 2,400 men-at-arms. It was a modest army. But large-scale reinforcements were on their way. Louis de Chalon was expected to bring his own forces across from the

Tonnerrois to join them. The Count of Alençon was mustering men at Fougères on the march of Brittany. Bernard of Armagnac was actively recruiting in the south-west. Companies of *routiers* were being hired in Gascony and Castile. John the Fearless resolved to meet force with force. He nominated Waleran Count of Saint-Pol as his representative in Paris with funds to recruit troops and instructions to put the city in a state of defence. Saint-Pol, once the friend and ally of Louis of Orléans, had broken with him before his death and was now the most uncompromising partisan of his murderer. On 9 April John summoned his vassals in Artois and Burgundy and his allies across France and the Low Countries to meet him in arms at Cateau-Cambrésis east of Cambrai at the end of the month.[45]

Charles VI recovered his wits at about the beginning of April 1411 just as the crisis was unfolding, and remained more or less lucid for the next four months. But how far his acts in this period were his own and how far they were dictated by those around him is difficult to say. On 8 April the delegates to the Estates-General, who had been waiting in Paris upon the King's recovery, gathered in the great hall of the Hôtel Saint-Pol. They were probably not a very representative body. The southern provinces, most of which were controlled by the Armagnac princes, do not seem to have been represented at all. The assembly was dominated from the start by supporters of the Duke of Burgundy. The absence of the princes and the incipient civil war swept the original agenda away. Instead of the reform of the state, the only business was to rally opinion against the Armagnacs. The meeting was brief, largely formal and dominated by the Count of Saint-Pol who doubled as the Duke of Burgundy's political manager and the spokesmen for all three estates. The outcome was a solemn royal injunction against the gathering of armies and an attempt to submit the dispute to the mediation of the Duke of Berry. Ostensibly these measures were directed at both sides. In fact letters were almost immediately issued in the King's name authorising John the Fearless to take up arms against his rivals notwithstanding the ordinances.

The choice of the Duke of Berry as mediator was on the face of it surprising given his covert sympathy for the princes. But it appears to have been no more than a device for delaying the junction of the Duke of Orléans' forces. John's preparations were well behind his rival's and he needed time to gather his strength. When, a few days after the dispersal of the Estates-General, a delegation of royal councillors came before him at Arras to ask him to defer the muster of his army, he readily agreed to defer it by a month. It was a cheap concession. It could not have assembled earlier anyway. Charles of

Orléans' reaction was very different. He had nothing to gain by delay and at the end of May rejected the proposal outright. There would be no peace in France, he wrote, for as long as the King remained the prisoner of a clique of his enemies. He named ten of these enemies, all prominent Burgundians at court, who controlled the King's council, poured slander into the King's ears and prevented him from doing justice to the murderers of Louis of Orléans. Two of them, he alleged, had themselves been privy to the crime.[46]

As in 1410, the Duke of Brittany was uncomfortably placed between the two factions. At the beginning of June 1411 he made a last-ditch attempt to force a settlement on both sides before they began to fight each other. He arrived unexpectedly in Paris with a corps of Breton troops large enough to shelter him from any attempt at intimidation. As the King's son-in-law and a peer of France he was able to take control of affairs for a time out of the hands of the clique of Burgundian partisans on the royal council. The ten enemies of Charles of Orléans identified in Charles's letter were excluded from all meetings of the council at which the feud of Burgundy and Orléans was discussed. A great council was summoned, attended not just by the King's usual advisers but by the bishops present in Paris, the judges of the Parlement and representatives of the city and the University. They deliberated over several days in the middle of June and were persuaded to take a line of strict neutrality. Both sides were ordered to lay down their arms and forbidden to enter the city. A fresh mediation exercise was launched, to be conducted by the Duke of Berry in conjunction with the Queen and John V himself. They were to sit at Melun, away from the intimidating atmosphere of Paris. Meanwhile a larger assembly drawn from all France, in effect another meeting of the Estates-General, was summoned to meet in the capital in July to consider further measures to control the violence of the factions.[47]

These courageous measures all bore the imprint of the Duke of Brittany. They might have succeeded better if they had been adopted earlier. But by the time that the new assembly opened in Paris early in July 1411 the prospect of peace was already draining away. On the northern march of Burgundy Louis de Chalon had struck the first blow for the Armagnacs by recapturing his town and castle of Tonnerre from John the Fearless's garrison. This was quickly followed by the capture of a number of other strongholds of the Tonnerrois. Three other Armagnac armies were on the move. Philip of Orléans, whose troops had been quartered around Coucy for the last three months, advanced towards Saint-Quentin to cut the main road to Paris. They garrisoned the important crossings of

the Somme at Ham and of the Oise at Chauny. The Count of Alençon was planning to march north from Fougères with an estimated 1,500 Bretons and Normans. Charles of Orléans was at Jargeau on the Loire with the Count of Armagnac, the Constable, Arthur de Richemont and a large army of Bretons, Gascons and retainers of the house of Orléans. Here, on 14 July 1410, he issued his manifesto and launched his campaign. This time the focus was firmly on the grievances of his house. The young prince (he was not yet seventeen) recited at length the story of his father's murder and the hypocrisy, arrogance and impunity of the Duke of Burgundy. He repudiated the 'hollow peace' of Chartres which had been forced on him by the King contrary to every principle of justice and honour. John the Fearless had confessed his crime. No further formalities were required to justify his punishment. Only his usurpation of power and his control over the King and the Dauphin had saved him. Denied justice by the King, said Charles, he was entitled to obtain it by force of arms.[48]

In Paris the national assembly called into being by the Duke of Brittany opened early in July. It is difficult to know how national it really was. But it does not matter, for its deliberations were rapidly overtaken by events. The assembly tried to raise its own army to enforce the peace but it was impotent without money or credit. It fell back on empty declarations and sterile commands. A message was carried to the Armagnac captains at Jargeau by that honourable old public servant Marshal Boucicaut. He protested in the King's name against the resort to arms at a time when the mediation at Melun had hardly begun and ordered them to disband their army at once. Boucicaut's pleas fell on deaf ears. The royal council in Paris ordered the passages of the Seine and the Marne to be closed to both armies. The bridge-towns were ordered to shut their gates and guard their walls. All barges of the Seine were to be brought into walled towns or sunk in the river. These orders were obeyed but too late. Charles of Orléans had already forced a ford over the Seine south of Melun and crossed the Marne at La Ferté-sous-Jouarre. He reached Coucy at the beginning of August. The Count of Alençon encountered greater difficulty but eventually found enough intact barges in the Seine to ferry his men across the river west of Mantes. From here he made for the march of Picardy to join forces with the Duke of Bourbon at Clermont. Together Alençon and Bourbon seized the walled towns of Nesle, Roye and Montdidier, barring all the main roads south from Arras to Paris. In about the middle of August all the Armagnac commanders met at Charles of Orléans' castle at Acy-en-Multien east of Senlis to concert their plans. The Armagnacs now had a total of about 4,000 men-at-arms under their

command, representing a cavalry strength of about 7,000 mounted men including *gros varlets* (armed servants) plus a corps of bowmen of uncertain strength, perhaps 10,000 men in all.[49]

At Melun the attempt at mediation fell apart. John the Fearless's position was that he would negotiate on the terms agreed at Chartres and on no other basis. Charles delivered his answer to the mediators in person as he passed Melun with his army on his way north. It was equally uncompromising. The Chartres terms were completely unacceptable to him. He wanted justice for the murder of his father. Nothing less would do. The Queen made a final attempt to urge a truce on the parties. But her two colleagues had already given up. John V abandoned the task and left for Brittany. The Duke of Berry, increasingly hostile to the populism of John the Fearless, withdrew to the royal castle of Montargis. On 10 August 1411 the heralds of Charles of Orléans found John the Fearless at Arras and delivered a formal letter of defiance in which the young prince and his brothers denounced him as a traitor and a murderer and declared their intention of fighting him. John sent back a characteristically intemperate answer dismissing their father as a 'false and disloyal traitor'. His death, he said, had been honourable to the King and pleasing to God.[50]

The departure of the Duke of Brittany was the signal for John the Fearless's representatives in Paris to reassert their control over the government and the city. The moving spirit was the Count of Saint-Pol. Early in August he was selected by the citizens as Captain of Paris in place of the Duke of Berry, who was thought to be too sympathetic to the Armagnacs. A special commission of twenty-four members was created with dictatorial powers, on which the radicals of the city were strongly represented. The commission's chief instruments were the corporations of Parisian butchers and the Legoix family, Thomas and his three sons Guillemin, Guillaume and Jean, who had emerged as their leaders. They were supported by the skinners and tailors and by gangs of thugs organised by the *écorcheurs*, brutal, unskilled men of low status who did the dirty work of skinning and eviscerating carcasses in the back alleys of the butchers' quarters. These trades were the Duke of Burgundy's strongest supporters among the Parisians masses and he for his part rewarded them with political favours and money. The Legoix brothers were given the right to arm 500 butchers as a special militia at the expense of the city. Across Paris men proclaimed their loyalties in the streets by wearing the St Andrew's saltire, the Duke of Burgundy's sign, with the *fleur-de-lys* at the centre and the words 'Vive le Roi'. The guilds, led by the butchers, opened a reign of terror in the capital. A proclamation was read out at street corners

to the sound of trumpets banishing all supporters of the Duke of Orléans from the city. The butchers patrolled the streets seeking out victims. Some 300 prominent citizens were expelled, including the Provost of the Merchants Charles Culdoe. Some of these men were not Armagnacs at all but merely victims of obscure personal vendettas. It was enough to say of a man 'there goes an Armagnac', a contemporary wrote, for him to be attacked and imprisoned. It was the first overt appearance of the proletarian violence to which the John the Fearless had always implicitly appealed.[51]

On 12 August 1411 Charles VI presided at a meeting of his council packed with Burgundians. They approved the issue of letters dispensing the Duke of Burgundy from the ordinances forbidding the princes to take up arms against each other. Not a single opponent was prepared to show his face except for the Archbishop of Reims, Simon Cramaud, and he fled the city shortly after the meeting had ended. It was Charles VI's last political act for five months. In about the middle of August he suffered a relapse. Two weeks later, at the beginning of September, the Dauphin presided at a great council at the Louvre in which the lay element was almost entirely composed of Burgundian partisans. He agreed to put his name to a letter inviting the Duke of Burgundy to march on Paris. The atmosphere at these meetings was oppressive. The elderly Bishop of Saintes, who had dared to suggest that the Duke of Burgundy might be made to do penance for the sake of peace, would have been lynched if the Count of Saint-Pol had not helped him escape. The property of Armagnacs everywhere was declared forfeit. The princes were stripped of their titles and appanages. The few remaining officers of state who supported them were dismissed including the Constable and the Master of the Royal Archers, both of whom were then serving in the armies of Charles of Orléans. Whatever fellow feeling might once have subsisted across the party lines was destroyed at every level down to small provincial towns and village streets. 'Have you not supported the Armagnacs against our lord the King and threatened to burn down my house?' said an inhabitant of Craon in Maine to his neighbour. Then he stove his head in with an axe.[52]

Notes

1
'Enquête', 216–17, 218–19, 219–21, 223–33, 241, 244; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 154–60; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 734.

2
Planning: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 109, 119; 'Enquête', 243. Anquetonville: L. Mirot (1911), 447–58; Vaughan (1966), 47–8. Marginal: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 732–4, 740; L. Mirot (1911), 457.

3
Pretence: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 189–90; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 736, 740; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 160–1; Coville (1932), 241–2; *Plancher, iii, no. 277 (p. cclxxviii, col. 2). Investigation: 'Enquête', esp. 218, 226, 229–30, 236–8; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 158, 161–2. On Tignonville: *Gall. Reg.*, ii, no. 6624, iv, no. 16481; Gonzalez, App. 535–8.

4
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 162–5, ii, 129; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 738–42; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 190; Fenin, *Mem.*, 5; *Plancher, iii, no. 277 (p. cclxxix, col. 1); Baye, *Journ.*, i, 208.

5
Epitaphier du Vieux Paris, ii, ed. E. Raunier (1893), no. 781; cf. pp. 316–17; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 165, 167–70, 172; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 742, 748–52; 'Geste des nobles', 118–19; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 195; Cochon, *Chron.*, 222; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 25. Montaigu: Coville (1932), 96. Pension: Pocquet 1939 [2]), 142. Jewellery: AD Côte d'Or B1554, fol. 112vo.

6
Itin. Jean, 363; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 172–4; *Istore*, ii, 431–2'; 'Geste des nobles', 117–18; Men-at-arms: Chauvelays, 167–9. Venue: 'Livre des trahisons', 25. Petit: Coville (1932), 1–86, 100–1. Duration: *Inv. AC Amiens*, ii, 4.

7
AD Côte d'Or B1554, fols 218–23 (summons); *Ord.*, ix, 292; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 752.

8
Penthièvre alliance: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 396; *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 836. Orléanist alliance: *Lettres de Jean V*, i, no. 323, 342, 1031. Journey to Paris: 'Chron. Brioc.', 91; 'Lettere Lucchesi', 179–80 (misdated 1409); *Ord.*, ix, 292; *Lettres de Jean V*, i, p. cxx.

9
March on Paris: AD Côte d'Or B1554, fols 215, 218–23 (muster on 17th), adding pages and armed servants ('varlets'); *Itin. Jean*, 363. Entry: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 175–7; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 752–3; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 190; Cochon, *Chron.*, 222–3; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 196. Lorraine alliance: *Plancher, iii, no. 255. Palace: Plagnieux. University: *Ord.*, ix, 293–4.

10
'Rapport officiel', 12–15, 25–6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 178–242; Coville (1932), 207–24, 299–384.

11
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 242–3; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 191; 'Rapport officiel', 26; Coville (1932), 100–5, 110. Bound copies: **Itin. Jean*, 587.

12
Royal instruments: *Plancher, iii, no. 256; *Bernier, pp. xxxii–xxxiii; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 243–4. Illness: Baye, *Journ.*, i, 223. Melun: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 766; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 191; 'Chron. Brioc.', 91–2; Cochon, *Chron.*, 238–9.

13
Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 56; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 191, 193; 'Chron. Brioc.', 91–2; Cochon, *Chron.*, 238–9. Berry's itinerary in Lehoux (1966–8), iii, 504.

14
Itin. Jean, 365; 'Chron. règne Jean de Bavière', ed. S. Balau, *Chroniques Liégeoises*, i (1913), 192. Liège background: Zantfliet, 'Chron.', *Vet. Script.*, v, 359–60 (quotation); *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iii, 14, 292; *Itin. Jean*, 350; *Istore*,

ii, 427; Kurth, iii, 40–57.

15

Munich, Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Ausw. St., Urk. Frankr., 3 (custody of Dauphin); AN KK31, fol. 47 (Charles at Melun); *Bernier (Preuves), pp. xxxi–xxxiii. Return to Paris: 'Chron. Brioc.', 94–5; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 56–8; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 194–5; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 237, 238–9; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, 267. Musters in Paris, 7–8 Sept.: BN PO 424/de Bosredon/2; 148/Auteuil/4; 2246/de Pesteils/2; 693/Chartres/51; 1699/Lestrange/6; 292/Gaucourt/25; 1851/Maricourt/3; 2246/de Pesteils/2; 2691/Sereni Cliers/4; etc.

16

Baye, *Journ.*, i, 240–1; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 269–348, 351–3.

17

*Plancher, iii, no. 260; *Cartul. Hainaut*, iii, 327–31, 333–51. Numbers: Vaughan (1966), 59–60.

18

'Geste des nobles', 123; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 196–7; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 136–8, 180–2; 'Ann. Avignonnaises', xvi, 171; *Lettres de Jean V*, ii, no. 1041; *Ord.*, ix, 369–71. Recruitment: e.g. BN Fr. 20388, fol. 142 (Forez).

19

Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 197; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 182, 184; 'Chron. Brioc.', 95; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 245, 249; 'Geste des Nobles', 123–4. Cash: BN Fr. 20412/53; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 138. Burgundian agents: AD Côte d'Or B1571, fol. 56.

20

Valentine: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 178–80; Collas, 419. Orléans domains: *Ord.*, ix, 261–4; AD Pyr.-Atl. E636 (Périgord); *Regesta chronologico-diplomatica Ruperti Regis*, ed. J. Chmel (1834), 185; 'Docs. Luxemb.', no. 295 (Luxembourg); *Pièces Louis I, 196–219*. Savoisy: 'Geste des nobles', 132; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 118. Emancipation: *Champollion-Figeac, 274–6. 'I was young': *Champion (1969), 542.

21

Itin. Jean, 368; Chauvelays, 180–4 (700 men-at-arms not including armed servants and archers); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 391–2; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 197.

22

Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 194–200; *Cartellieri (1912–14), ii, 17–19 (minute); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 392–5; 'Geste des nobles', 126; *Calmette, 163–6; *Cartul. Hainaut*, iii, 359–60. K of Navarre: see AD Côte d'Or B1558, fols 115–115vo; *Ord.*, ix, 423–5; Plancher, iii, 290. D. of Anjou: Valois (1896–1902), iv, 127.

23

*L. Mirot (1931), 339–41; *Plancher, iii, PJ no. 258; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 194–202; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 397–401; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 260.

24

Baye, *Journ.*, i, 260–1; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 199; *Journ. B. Paris*, 4–5; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 4; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 250; Munich, Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv, Pfalz-Neuburg Auswärtige Staaten, Urk. 981 (treaty). Melun: Lehoux (1966–8), iii, 153n^{6}. Finance: BN Coll. Bourgogne 54, fol. 302; 56, fol. 241; 58, fol. 98.

25

Return to Paris: *Itin. Jean*, 371. Plans: BN Coll. Bourgogne 54, fol. 251; AD Côte d'Or B1558, fol. 33; Chauvelays, 186–91. Coup: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 250, 270–8, 280, 426; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 201, 246; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 42–

4, 46–8, 138; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 204; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 290–2; 'Geste des nobles', 127–8. Dismissals: Borrelli de Serres, iii, 131–2; Rey, i, 299–302, 306, ii, 149, 388, 392, 461, 470–2, 486–7, 519.

26

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 41–2, 48; 'Geste des nobles', 129–30; *Ord.*, ix, 468–78; Rey, i, 107–9, 120–1, 300–2 ii, 40–3, 392, 470–2, 519; Borrelli de Serres, iii, 334–5. Appropriations: BN Fr. 20391, fol. 53; AD Côte d'Or B1558, fols 33, 33vo, 34; B1560, fol. 43; B1601, fol. 133vo; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, no. 390; Vaughan (1966), 86–7; Pocquet (1940–1), 119.

27

Parlement: *Ord.*, ix, 468, note (a). Council: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 45, 60; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 286. Agreement with Queen: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 276; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 50; *Plancher, iii, PJ no. 263; AN KK48, fols 1–2; Rey, ii, 185–7. Isabelle received an additional 111,165 *livres* in assignments on the *aides* in 1410: AN KK48, fols 4–20. Documentation (all discussed earlier): AN J369/9 (discharge, 7 Dec.); *Ord.*, ix, 488–92, xii, 229–31; *Plancher, iii, PJ no. 261. King's recovery: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 250. Queen's return: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 53. Great council: Baye, *Journ.*, i, 305–7, ii, 297; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 50, 51–3, 54–7; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 282–6; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 201. Dauphin's administration: BN Fr. n.a. 20528, p. 175; BN Fr. 25708/630 (agreed with Queen on 19 Nov.); Vaughan (1966), 81; Schnerb (2005), 522; Famiglietti, 86–7.

28

Anglo-French truce: *Foed.*, viii, 515–18, 519, 521–4, 552–60. Anglo-Flemish treaty: *Foed.*, viii, 530–3, 551–9; *Rec. Ord. Pays-Bas*, iii, nos 85, 89, 94. Narrow seas: PRO 76/92, mm. 12–11; *Varenbergh, 548–72. Périgord: AD Pyr.-Atl. E805; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 340–1 (for Moruscle and Durfort, see *Inv. AC Périgueux, 97*). Albret's campaign was financed by hearth taxes in Limousin and Périgord, not by the treasury in Paris: AD Pyr.-Atl. E805; *Jurades de Bergerac*, i, 160–1.

29

Proc. PC, i, 302–3; *Foed.*, viii, 571, 586–7, 601, 621; *Cal. Signet L.*, no. 740; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 46–7; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 252, 280, 282–4; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 306. Marriage: Oxford, Bodley, MS Ashmole 789, fols 132–132vo (Sept. 1408); *Foed.*, viii, 571 (March 1409).

30

Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 282–4, 324; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 53–6; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 306, ii, 297. Châtillon talks: *Foed.*, viii, 621, 630, 632.

31

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 51–3, 57–8; 'Livre des trahisons', 60–1.

32

Attendance at councils: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 50, 53; *Ord.*, ix, 489; *Plancher, iii, PJ no. 261. Berry, Bourbons: Rey, i, 300; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 272; 'Geste des nobles', 129. Disaffection: 'Livre des trahisons', 68; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 201. Italian: 'Lettere Lucchesi', 180–2 (misdated 1411).

33

Support: BN Coll. Doat 193, fol. 91, 92 (Armagnac); BN PO 918/Coutes/17 (Brittany); BN PO 2859/de la Tour/5, 2606/du Saillant/20, 3002/Villars/48 (Albret); *Titres Bourbon*, no. 4819; AN K56/254, 6, 7 (Armagnac). Meetings: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 65, 77; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 316–18; Cagny, *Chron.*, 48–9; 'Geste des nobles', 130. Treaty: *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 831–3, 845–6. Armagnac: BN PO 93/Armagnac/96; BN Coll. Doat 193, fols 91–2; Champion (1969), 72–3.

34
'Chron. Brioc.', 89; *Chron. Bourbon*, 309–13.
35
League army: Cagny, *Chron.*, 49–50; BN PO 93/Armagnac/96; 'Chron. Brioc.', 89; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 324–6, 328–30, 336–8, 342–52. Burgundian army: BN Coll. Bourgogne 58, fol. 53; AD Côte d'Or B1560, fol. 217, 231; Pocquet (1940–1), 114–15; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 78–9, 81–2, 87–9; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 206–7; *Ord.*, ix, 530–1 (*arrière-ban*); *Inv. AC Rouen*, 41; *Extr. Reg. Tournai*, 77–83; *Chavanon, 184–5. John V: *Lettres de Jean V*, ii, no. 1099; *Preuves Bretagn*e, ii, 835–40; 'Chron. Brioc.', 89–90. Orders to disarm: *Ord.*, ix, 515–17, 531–4; *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 831–3, 841; BN Fr. 20590/50, 52. Poitiers meeting, manifesto: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 342–50, 354–6. Paris: ibid., iv, 360–8; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 204–5.
36
'Geste des nobles', 131; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 80–6, 95, 102; Fenin, *Mem.*, 16; Cagny, *Chron.*, 53; 'Chron. Brioc.', 90. Arthur: BN PO 1037/le Dur/15. Gilles: Pocquet (1935), 47. Albret: *Ord.*, ix, 510; BN PO 493; 'Geste des nobles', 131; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 372; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 340.
37
Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 356–60.
38
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 89, 91–6; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 360, 370–6; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 339; 'Geste des nobles', 140–1; Lehoux (1966–8), iii, 196.
39
Burgundian deployments: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 360, 376; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 94–5; BN PO 418/des Bordes/41 (Montereau); BN Fr. 20528, pp. 172–3 (St-Cloud, Mantes, Melun, Meulan, Samois). Supplies, reinforcements: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 95; Gruel, *Chron.*, 7–8. Looting: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 366–8; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 89–90; *Journ. B. Paris*, 7–10. Orléanist finances: BN PO 47/Amboise/48, 93/Armagnac/96; *Inv. joyaux Orléans*, 157–70; AN K57/4. Burgundian finances: AD Côte d'Or B1560, fols 102, 104, 117, 118vo, 160vo–161, 273–4; B1562, fols 14vo, 107; *Ord.*, ix, 545; Baye, *Journ.*, i, 332–3; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 365–6; Vaughan (1966), 86; Pocquet (1940–1), 119.
40
Choix de pièces, i, 329–35; *Plancher, iii, PJ no. 168 bis.
41
Dispersal: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 382–4, 402–6; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 208–9; *Itin. Jean,* 376; *Ord.*, ix, 573–5; Lehoux (1966–8), iii, 205n^{6}. Cf. on companies: BN Coll. Bourgogne 54, fol. 5; BN Fr. n.a. 3641/618.
42
Promises renewed: *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 845–6. Charles VI: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 101. Council: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 384. In June 1411, Charles of Orléans identified ten councillors committed to John the Fearless: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 118–19. John identified eleven whom he regarded as Orléanists (some of whom were in fact neutral): AD Nord B657/15183. Neither list included the princes or officers of state present *ex officio*. Dauphin: BN Fr. n.a. 20528, pp. 163, 183–4; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 205. Provost: BN PO 2747/St-Cler/42. Estates-G: *Inv. AC Toulouse*, 484–5 (AA 37/26); *Corr. mairie Dijon*, i, no. 7.
43
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 109–12; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 388.
44

Preparations: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 109–12; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 386–8, 400; BN PO 93/Armagnac/98. Finance: Champion (1969), 80–2; BN PO 414/Bonsdrac/5, 2157/Orléans/469. Alliances: AN K56/254, 5, 6, 8. Richemont: *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 867–8; Cosneau, 8–9. L. de Chalon: BN PO 650/Chalon-Orange/16; Petit, 251–62, 280–1.

45

Vertus: BN Coll. Bourgogne 58, fol. 153; BN PO 455/Bourbon/38–40, 1703/de Lavandès/3, 2305/du Ploesquellec/6, 2817/Themericourt/8, etc.; *Cat. Arch. Joursanvault*, no. 92. Bourbon: 'Information', 298–9, 302, 305, 309, 311–12, 313–14, 320. Strength: BN Coll. Bourgogne 58, fol. 153. Recruitment: *Cat. Arch. Joursanvault*, nos 95–6; BN PO 93/Armagnac/98. Gascons: BN Fr. n.a. 20512/281. Alençon: Cagny, *Chron.*, 58–9. Castilians: BN PO 360/Le Blanc/5, 2914/Valdes/2–5. D. Burgundy: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 114; BN Coll. Bourgogne 58, fol. 188; AD Côte d'Or B1572, fols 19–19vo, B1576, fols 76vo–77. St-Pol: BN Coll. Bourgogne 58, fol. 169; AD Côte d'Or B1572, fols 19–19vo, B1576, fols 76vo–77; *Ord.*, ix, 581–2.

46

Charles VI: Lehoux (1966–8), iii, 205n^{6}. Estates-G: *Corr. mairie Dijon*, i, no. 7; *Inv. AC Toulouse*, 484–5 (AA37/26); BN Coll. Bourgogne 54, fol. 5–5vo. Letters: AD Côte d'Or B11893 (11 Apr. 1411). Appeal for delay: BN Coll. Bourgogne 54, fol. 5–5vo; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 408–10; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 116–21; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 13–14.

47

Arrival of John V: BN Fr. 20405/17; *Lettres de Jean V*, ii, no. 1119 (he was there by 4 June: *Inv. AC Toulouse*, 98 [AA5/357]). Council: AD Nord B657/15183. Great council: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 412–16; *Choix de pièces*, i, 342; *Plancher, iii, PJ, no. 274; *Vaissète, x, 1948–50.

48

Assembly: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 414. Tonnerrois: **Itin. Jean*, 596–7; BN Coll. Bourgogne 21, fol. 41vo. Philip: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 123–4; BN PO 671/de Chantermerle/3, 1189/de Fontaines/28, 2243/de la Porte/37 (all 7 July). Alençon: Cagny, *Chron.,* 58–9. D. of Orléans: 'Livre des trahisons', 82; *Plancher, iii, no. 277.

49

Assembly: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 416; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 17. Boucicaut: *Choix de pièces*, i, 341–3. River passages: 'Geste des nobles', 135; *Doc. Clos des Galées*, i, nos 1628–30, 1633; BN Fr. 26038/4489. Charles's march: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 180–1; 'Geste des nobles', 135. Alençon: Cagny, *Chron.*, 59–60; Monstrelet, Chron., ii, 164; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 452–4; BN PO 1747/Loriot/2. Acy: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 181; Laborde, *Preuves*, iii, no. 6220 (men-at-arms).

50

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 151–2, 180; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 440–2; *Plancher, iii, PJ nos 273–4; *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 859. Berry's departure: *Rev. Hist.… Département du Tarn* (1886–7), 107–8. Defiance: *Plancher, iii, PJ no. 271; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 436; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 152.

51

Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 442–50; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 224–5; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 162–4. Butchers: 'Livre des trahisons', 106–10; *Journ. B. Paris*, 37n; AD Côte d'Or B1570, fol. 138 (money from John).

52

Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 444–6, 462–6; *Plancher, PJ nos 272, 275; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 162 (relapse); *Choix de pièces*, ii, 25–7 (Craon).

CHAPTER VII

Unwelcome Friends: The English in France, 1411–1413

In August 1410, as the princes of the league of Gien gathered their strength at Tours for their first attempt on Paris, Christine de Pisan addressed an emotional 'Lamentacion' to the Duke of Berry. The poet was an admirer of Louis of Orléans and profoundly suspicious of the demagoguery of the Duke of Burgundy. But she was above all a strong patriot. 'Ah France, the once glorious kingdom, Alas, what shall I say?' With a finer sense of history than most of her contemporaries she foresaw that France's political divisions would one day bring her to the state to which Italy had been reduced by the internecine wars of the Guelphs and Ghibellines. It would expose the French like the divided Greeks in the face of Xerxes to defeat at the hands of their 'natural enemies'. The reference was unmistakably to England.[1]

Judging by its cursory and inaccurate treatment in English chronicles the murder of Louis of Orléans was hardly noticed in England and its political significance took some time to sink in. Among those who knew what was happening there was even some sympathy for the travails of France. Thomas Hoccleve, the principal clerk of the Privy Seal Office, completed his greatest poem the *Regement of Princes* in 1411 and dedicated it to Prince Henry. It is filled with melancholy reflections on events in France, a terrible warning 'at the dore here as men may beholde', of the fate of divided nations.

> I am an Englishman and am thy foe,
> for thou a foe art unto my liegeance;
> and yet mine heart stuffed is with woe
> to see thine unkindly disseverance.

Far from trying to exploit the catastrophe engulfing its ancient rival, the English government's first reaction had been a determined refusal to become involved. Early in 1408 a great council meeting at Westminster decided to remain neutral and Englishmen were forbidden to take service with either side.[2] The order made no impression on the unemployed professional soldiery of England, who were quick to take advantage of a fresh market for their

services. Longbowmen, who could only be found in any numbers in the British Isles, were particularly prized. At the battle of Othée in September 1408 some 300 English archers had fought in the ranks of the Liègeois. Henry IV's brother-in-law Sir John Cornwall raised a company of sixty men-at-arms and 500 archers and would have fought on the other side if he had arrived in time. English mercenaries fought for the Duke of Brittany against the Penthièvres in 1409 and in the army of the league of Gien in 1410. Gascons from the English duchy were hired for the league by the Count of Armagnac. In the spring of 1411, as the Armagnacs were gathering their forces in the valley of the Loire, they hired several English companies and at least one Welsh one. But there is no evidence of any official encouragement of these ventures in England. The first English companies to fight for the French princes almost certainly sought out their employers in France.[3]

Henry IV had plenty of reasons to stay out of the French imbroglio. His finances, although healthier than they had been, were tight. If the crisis in Wales had passed this was not yet obvious to his ministers or to Parliament. The maintenance of the King's garrisons there remained the largest item in the Crown's military budget after Calais. England's principal enemy was still perceived to be Scotland, not France. The situation there was rapidly deteriorating. In 1407 the Earl of Douglas had been released on parole after sealing a document in which he promised to serve Henry IV and his sons against all men except for the King of Scotland. Henry had expected him to become his chief partisan in the Scottish borders. In fact he had applied himself with his habitual energy to rebuilding his old influence, and when his parole expired eighteen months later he had abandoned his hostages to their fate and refused to return. Shortly after this, and partly no doubt because of it, George Dunbar had given up the lands and pensions which Henry IV had showered upon him in England and returned to Scotland as part of a deal with Douglas and Albany which saw him restored to his old titles and most of his old lands. With the return of these great men of the Scottish border the old tribal affinities re-emerged and with them the tradition of guerilla warfare, cattle-rustling and piracy at sea. The elaborate system of march days and border law by which the peace had been more or less maintained in the later years of Richard II had been allowed to fall into terminal decline under Henry IV. As a result the cycle of violence across the border proved impossible to control. In May 1409 Douglas's followers in Teviotdale captured Jedburgh, one of the handful of surviving English castles in Scotland, and demolished it. In the following year one of Dunbar's sons captured the English coastal

fortress of Fastcastle north of Berwick. Another, operating in conjunction with the Douglases, destroyed the fortified bridge and much of the town of Roxburgh. The English responded to these incidents with angry diplomatic protests and retaliatory raids on Scottish shipping in the Forth. For his part the Duke of Albany tried to breathe life into the 'auld alliance' with France, exchanging embassies with the distracted court of Charles VI. According to the French chronicler Monstrelet the French subsidised some of the Scottish raids. By 1411 the English Crown found itself spending almost as much on the defence of the Scottish march as it was on holding down Wales.[4]

Henry IV's health continued to deteriorate. At the end of 1408 there had been a series of fresh attacks which left him incapable of attending to day-to-day business and only intermittently capable of dealing with major issues. The English government was now effectively controlled by three men: Henry of Monmouth, Prince of Wales, and the King's two half-brothers, Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, and Sir Thomas Beaufort. The Prince, now twenty-four years old, had a reputation for libertinage and low company. But he was a soldier and administrator of conspicuous ability, widely credited with the successful suppression of Owen Glendower's rebellion. He 'exercised equally the feats of Venus and Mars', wrote a contemporary. The young Henry made no attempt to conceal his impatience to succeed to his father's throne. He was energetic, ambitious, impulsive and brash. He also had a strong following among the Commons, the Londoners and the younger members of the nobility. These qualities inevitably created tension between the King and his heir as men turned to follow the rising star. Their relations were poisoned, wrote Henry's Tudor biographer, 'by th'actes of youth, which he exercised more than meanely, and for the great recourse of people unto him of whom his courte was at all times more aboundant than the Kinge his father's'. In December 1409 the Prince had combined with his Beaufort uncles to unseat the Chancellor Archbishop Arundel and the Treasurer Sir John Tiptoft, Henry IV's closest friends on the council, both of whom left office against his wishes. Early in 1410 they had installed a new administration with the support of one of the more tumultuous Parliaments of the reign and filled it with the Prince's friends and protégés, most of whom were young noblemen of the rising generation or officials associated with his household. Sir Thomas Beaufort became Chancellor.[5]

Initially the Prince and his friends pursued the same foreign policy as Henry IV had done. The priority remained a permanent settlement with France, a policy which still commanded general

assent among the political class in England. So far as they had any view of their own about the divisions of France, the group of men around the Prince were more inclined to deal with the Duke of Burgundy than his rivals. There were obvious reasons for this which had nothing to do with any sympathy for the Duke's cause. John the Fearless was in effective control of the French King and his council. For the moment he was the only power in France in a position to deliver the permanent settlement which the English craved. He was also the ruler of Flanders, traditionally a prime concern of English governments. Like many of their compatriots these men also associated the house of Orléans with the aggressively anti-English policy pursued by Louis of Orléans in the last years of his life. Yet there is no evidence that they really understood the divisions of the French. The one prominent figure in England who did understand them was the Queen, Joan of Navarre. She was in close touch with her brother Charles III of Navarre, who was the Duke of Burgundy's closest ally in Paris.

Into this uncertain political world the Armagnac princes blundered. Initial contacts appear to have been made through the English administration in Bordeaux, probably by the Count of Armagnac. At some point in the winter of 1410–11 the leaders of the league of Gien succeeded in recruiting a large Anglo-Gascon company, 100 men-at-arms and 200 archers led by an English soldier of fortune called Walter Clifford, a former captain of Courbefy now in command at Libourne. They also obtained a safe-conduct to England from Henry IV's representatives in the Château de l'Ombrière. At the end of January 1411 Charles of Orléans sent his Seneschal of Angoulême, Guillaume Bataille, to England via Castile for what his accountants coyly referred to as 'certain business of great importance close to our lord's heart of which no further description is to appear'. Bataille was joined in England by the Duke of Berry's diplomatic factotum Casin de Sereinvilliers, Jean de Loupiac, a household knight of the Count of Armagnac, and Jean du Juch, a chamberlain of the Duke of Brittany with close links to the house of Orléans. These men brought with them a proposal that Henry IV should supply an army to fight for them in France in return for a share of the Burgundian domains in the north once John the Fearless had been dispossessed. They obtained an interview with the English King. But they found him sick and unwilling to attend to the matter, and got nothing more from him than an indistinct promise to consider their proposals once the current Anglo-Flemish truce expired in June 1411.

The main result of the Armagnac mission was to provoke a counter-offer from the Duke of Burgundy. Joan of Navarre had

written to him when the Armagnac delegation arrived warning him of what was afoot. The message was confided to a Breton squire of her household called Jean de Kernezn who was also retained by the Duke of Burgundy and John of Brittany. Jean de Kernezn was one of those discreet confidential agents with the knack of serving many masters. He was destined to play a pivotal role in the negotiations of the following year. He delivered the message and returned to England with a proposal for a military alliance between England and the captive government of Charles VI. It was suggested that the alliance should be cemented by a marriage between the Prince of Wales and one of John the Fearless's daughters.[6]

At the end of April 1411, after the annual Garter celebrations, a great council gathered at Windsor Castle in the presence of King Henry to consider the various options. Jean de Kernezn was present in the Queen's entourage and so were at least some of the Armagnac ambassadors. There was a vigorous debate about whether to intervene in France and if so on which side. The man who perceived most clearly the possibilities of the situation was the Prince of Wales. He was determined to exploit the opportunity presented by the gathering war clouds in France and refused to be put off by the hesitations of the others. Shortly afterwards he made direct contact with John the Fearless. In July, at about the time that Charles of Orléans issued his manifesto from Jargeau, the Duke of Burgundy sent a confidential mission to England. He had, said his emissary, a 'fervent desire' for a marriage alliance with England and a desperate need for military support against the growing strength of the Armagnac armies on the march of Picardy. The English response was immediate. Several English squires joined the Duke of Burgundy's staff before the end of July. As captain of Calais the Prince ordered the lieutenant-governor, William Bardolf, to take as many men as he could spare to join the Duke's forces. A small force of the Prince's own archers was sent out from England to serve in John the Fearless's personal bodyguard. But these were merely earnests of future performance. The plan was to recruit an entire army in England and ship it across the Channel to Calais before the end of September. With large forces at Calais capable of intervening decisively in the French civil war the English expected to be able to dictate their own terms.[7]

Henry IV showed every sign of taking a close interest in the project. On 14 August 1411 he even announced his intention of taking command of the army in person. On about the 26th he arrived at the royal mansion by the Thames at Rotherhithe. There the council met over several days to review the situation in his presence. It was agreed to call a great council for 9 September to

approve the final plans for armed intervention in France. Parliament would be summoned later to find the means to pay for it. Meanwhile ambassadors were appointed to negotiate with the Duke of Burgundy. Their instructions, which were settled in the last days of August, were to extract as much benefit from the situation in France as they could. They were to demand an ample dowry with the Burgundian princess. They were to find out what military assistance John the Fearless needed and exactly what he could do for the English in return. They were to explore how far John the Fearless was willing to assist the King of England against Charles VI himself. This, they were to explain, was a critical point for them, for the main object of English policy was to recover the lost territories in south-western France which Charles VI was wrongfully occupying. They were to hint in the subtlest possible way that Henry had still not ruled out the possibility of doing a deal with the Armagnacs instead. Most of the ambassadors chosen to deliver this message were close associates of the Prince. Their leader, Henry Chichele Bishop of St David's, was a shrewd, ambitious lawyer in royal service who had forged a close connection with the Prince and had joined the royal council the previous year. The senior lay member, Thomas FitzAlan Earl of Arundel, was the Prince's retainer and friend, a skilful military commander who had taken a prominent part in the campaigns in Wales. Hugh Mortimer was the chamberlain of the Prince's household, a highly intelligent man who had risen from relative obscurity to great wealth in Henry's service and over the past five years had become his principal diplomatic adviser. John Catterick, already a veteran of several diplomatic missions to France, was a clerk in the service of Henry Beaufort. These men were destined to play a prominent part in the conduct of diplomatic relations with France over the next five years.[8]

The King sealed the ambassadors' instructions with his own signet. But within days he changed his mind. Preparations for the King's departure stopped abruptly on 3 September. The circumstances are obscure. But he appears to have had a relapse. He was gripped by the morbid guilt about his own seizure of power that so often accompanied such crises. Suddenly he saw the issue in stark moral terms. Rounding on the Duke of Burgundy's ambassador, he declared that his master was in the wrong. Had he not murdered Charles of Orléans' father? Was he surprised when his victims' heirs made war on him? Henry advised the Duke to withdraw to his own domains. Only if his enemies attacked him there would he have a moral claim on anyone else's support. Taken aback by this unexpected turn, the ambassador turned in dismay to the Prince of Wales. Henry of Monmouth was more forthcoming.

Defying his father, he arranged for the Earl of Arundel to take command of the army that was already beginning to assemble in London and to lead it to France. Arundel was to be accompanied on the expedition by Richard Beauchamp Earl of Warwick, another retainer of the Prince who had distinguished himself in the lists and in Wales, and had recently returned from two years of travelling in Europe and the Holy Land.[9]

On about 26 September 1411 the two earls landed at Calais with a company of 200 English men-at-arms and 800 archers. Over the following days several hundred more archers arrived from England to swell their numbers. By the beginning of October Arundel had more than 2,000 men under his command, about nine-tenths of them longbowmen. This was modest by the standard of the great armies of Edward III, but it was still the largest expeditionary army to leave England since 1381. It was significant for other reasons also. In the first place it marked the first military fruits of the suppression of the rebellion in Wales. Arundel was the dominant territorial lord of Wales after the King, while Warwick owned the rich lordship of Gower in the south. Most of the bowmen that they took to France must have been recruited in the Welsh marches. Secondly the expedition signalled a renewed appetite for soldiering among a younger generation of the English nobility. Arundel and Warwick were not the only men willing to hire themselves out as soldiers of fortune to the Duke of Burgundy. The Yorkshire knight Sir Gilbert Umfraville, already at twenty-one a veteran of the fighting on the Scottish march, and his cousin Sir John Rose independently raised a company of ninety men-at-arms. The Cambridgeshire knight Sir Roger Trumpington cannot have been much older than Umfraville. He raised a company of twenty-two men-at-arms. These men were not serving out of duty. Like many other captains of the army they joined up for adventure and profit.[10]

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By the time that the Earl of Arundel reached France John the Fearless had been in the field for more than three weeks. At the beginning of September 1411 he and his brother Anthony Duke of Brabant had assembled more than 20,000 fighting men at Douai. The kernel of the army was a cavalry force with a payroll strength of about 4,000 men-at-arms, perhaps about 7,000 mounted men including the usual mass of *gros varlets* accompanying their masters. Almost all of them had been recruited in Artois and Brabant and from among the Duke of Burgundy's retainers in Flanders. There was a large corps of archers and crossbowmen, an artillery train, a

long supply train with a wagon to every ten men, and a crowd of labourers and pioneers estimated at 4,000. But the greater part of the army comprised an unruly host of 9,000 infantry and 1,000 crossbowmen raised by the Four Members of Flanders. The army would have been larger still if John had been able to draw on the military resources of the duchy and county of Burgundy. But in Burgundy the whole of August and every available man had been occupied in operations against the Count of Tonnerre. It was not until September that they set out for the Somme under the command of John's brother Philip Count of Nevers. On 3 September 1411 the Duke of Burgundy decided to advance south from Douai without waiting for the English or the men of Burgundy.[11]

The Armagnacs roughly matched their adversaries in cavalry, but they were greatly outnumbered in infantry and bowmen and seem to have had little or no artillery. Lacking the strength to confront the enemy host in the field, they dispersed their forces in various walled towns and castles on the Somme and the Oise in the hope of stopping them at the riverbanks. On 10 September the Duke of Burgundy's army arrived at Ham, an unwalled town dominated by a powerful fortress guarding the crossing of the Somme. The place was defended by several hundred men, mostly Gascons under the command of the Constable's brother Bérard d'Albret and the former Admiral of France Clignet de Bréban, perhaps the most fanatical of the Armagnac leaders. John the Fearless summoned the place to surrender in the name of the King. The response was a stream of abuse from the walls and a sudden sortie from the gates which killed a large number of Flemings as they were setting up camp. Yet for all the show of defiance the castle held out for just three days. The Burgundians brought up three bombards. They included an enormous engine called *Griette* which shot stones of 400 pounds 'the size of a fishing smack'. Its first projectile overshot and fell into the Somme. The second ricocheted off the ground and shattered two walls of the gatehouse, killing eight men inside. By the night of the 13th a large breach had been made. The Duke's engineers had begun to construct timber pontoons over the river. The garrison, seeing that further resistance was useless and fearing for their lives if they were captured, secretly abandoned the place, creeping through the Burgundian lines under cover of darkness. On the next morning the besiegers moved into the town. They expelled the population and looted and burned their homes as they watched. The fate of Ham struck fear into the hearts of the other towns of the region. Nesle and Roye were abandoned by their Armagnac garrisons without a fight. The Duke decided to lay siege to Montdidier, a walled town standing at the hub of the road network

of southern Picardy, which was occupied by the last remaining Armagnac garrison of the region. The place could simply have been bypassed. But John wanted to allow time for his brother to join him with the reinforcements from Burgundy. Philip of Nevers was then approaching Saint-Quentin with about 2,000 men-at-arms and 1,000 bowmen, perhaps 4,000 fighting men in all including armed servants. On 22 September John the Fearless's army arrived outside the walls of Montdidier.[12]

The fall of the Somme fortresses forced the Armagnacs to rethink their strategy. Containment had failed. Plans to defend the line of the Oise were abandoned. Instead they concentrated their forces at Beaumont-sur-Oise and then marched north towards Montdidier to confront the Burgundians in the field. In view of the disparity of numbers this was a high-risk plan. But they hoped to be able to defeat the smaller army of Philip of Nevers before he could join forces with John the Fearless. On about 25 September they encamped around the buildings of the Antonine hospital at Catenoy, hoping to hold off John the Fearless while the Count of Armagnac went forward with the van to confront the Count of Nevers. Philip of Nevers decided not to risk a fight. He abandoned his march and made straight for Paris.

At almost the same moment, there was a mutiny of the Flemish contingent outside Montdidier. The Flemings had been a disruptive element ever since the army had left Douai. They quarrelled with each other about the order of march. They fell out with the men of Picardy. They fought with other contingents over booty and forage. They complained about the weather and the onset of winter, about their pay and about the length of the campaign, which exceeded their normal period of service. For the past few days John had been flattering, cajoling and haggling with them in a vain attempt to make them stay. Unfortunately he had already had to promise to release the men of Ghent, one of the larger Flemish contingents, by 27 September. As the day approached the other Flemish contingents told their captains that they would leave on the same day. With the Armagnacs coming up from the south the Dukes of Burgundy and Brabant implored them to stay. But the prospect of battle only increased the Flemings' desire to go home. Punctually on the 27th they loaded their baggage onto their carts, burned their camp and headed north. The Picard contingents scavenged over the charred remains of the Flemish encampment and plundered the rear of their baggage train. Then they too left for home. John had lost half his army. The rest, between 8,000 and 10,000 men, dug themselves into a defensive formation on rising ground by the public gibbet north of Montdidier, protected by a circle of wagons armed with

cannon. There they waited for the Armagnacs to appear.

After four hours John the Fearless decided not to risk a battle with his reduced numbers. He had received word that the Earls of Arundel and Warwick had arrived the day before at Calais. He resolved to retreat north, join forces with them and start again. That afternoon he hurriedly struck his camp and marched north in the wake of the Flemings. The first companies of the Armagnac vanguard arrived on the scene just in time to plunder the abandoned camp as the Burgundians were leaving. The other Armagnac commanders were still several miles away quarrelling about whether to attack or not. If they had moved faster or had had better intelligence they might have caught the retreating Burgundians and won a famous victory. As it was John the Fearless had suffered a serious strategic reverse and a humiliating loss of face. The Armagnacs decided to strike at Paris while the enemy was demoralised. They even hoped that the gates might be opened for them without a fight. On 1 October they recrossed the Oise over an improvised timber bridge at Verberie, a short distance from Compiègne, and made for the capital.[13]

The Duke of Burgundy left his army encamped by the Somme at Péronne and arrived at Arras on 2 October 1411 to meet his English allies. On the following day he met the two English earls in his quarters in the abbey of St Vaast. They were shortly joined by Bishop Chichele and his fellow ambassadors. The Englishmen's first task was to negotiate terms for their support. But they quickly discovered that, desperate as John was, they had no bargaining power. The ambassadors had satchels full of appointments, credences and instructions. But the Duke had no interest in a political agreement with England which could only discredit him in France. He simply wanted their services as mercenaries. He was prepared to pay them well: more than he paid his own men and half as much again as the standard rates paid in English royal armies. In the end it was the only deal that could be made. Even that was regarded as scandalous in France. The Armagnacs indignantly denounced their adversaries' alliance with the ancient enemy, men who 'for sixty years had left their island fastness at the edge of the world to infest France like a swarm of insects'. They spread it about that John the Fearless had promised to do homage to Henry IV for Flanders and to cede Normandy and the conquered provinces of Aquitaine. It was even alleged that he had surrendered four ports of western Flanders as security for the undertaking. The Duke riposted with a circular distributed to the principal towns, in which he declared that he needed his mercenaries to restore the peace of the realm. His propagandists pointed out that the Armagnacs had

themselves tried to make just the kind of deal with the English that they accused him of making.[14]

At about midnight on 3 October 1411 the first Armagnac companies arrived before the walls of Paris. When the Duke of Orléans and his allies came up on the following morning they found the gates firmly closed and guarded. The loyalties of the Parisians had not been in the least shaken by the Duke's retreat from Montdidier. As soon as the news arrived a general assembly of the leading citizens was held in the Maison aux Piliers in the Place de Grève. They resolved to defend their city to the last man. The Provost summoned every adult male to be ready to fight. The streets were filled with people dressed in blue hoods and tunics crossed back and front with the St Andrew's saltire. The defence of the capital and its outlying region was in the hands of the Duke of Burgundy's lieutenant in the capital Waleran Count of Saint-Pol and his principal military lieutenant Enguerrand de Bournonville, the grim professional soldier from Picardy whom John had nominated as the Dauphin's tutor and jailer. They disposed of some 1,600 men-at-arms and 700 bowmen plus a corps of about 800 citizen-soldiers. These numbers were nearly doubled when Philip Count of Nevers reached Paris at the beginning of October. With the usual armed servants and military hangers-on there must have been at least 8,000 Burgundian soldiers in Paris. In addition there was a large Burgundian garrison at Saint-Denis: 500 men-at-arms and 150 bowmen under the command of John the Fearless's ally Jean de Chalon Prince of Orange. Smaller garrisons held Senlis and all the bridge-towns of the Seine between Mantes and Montereau. Every unguarded crossing of the river had been broken. It quickly became apparent that there was no room for an accommodation between the two sides. The defenders of Paris were too confident of their strength. When the Armagnac leaders sent two heralds into the city with a letter seeking an audience with the King and the Dauphin they were received by Pierre des Essarts, now reinstated as Provost, with oaths and abuse. He told them that they would be beheaded if they tried to deliver such a message again.[15]

The Armagnacs pitched their tents among the vineyards of the hill of Montmartre. Their position was not easy. A large populous city filled with professional soldiers and vigilant citizens was almost impossible to carry by assault. Only starvation could reduce it. But that would take time and the Armagnacs were short of time. They had to break the resistance of Paris before John the Fearless arrived from the north. Lacking the resources of the state they were also running out of money. As their arrears accumulated there was growing concern about their willingness to stay the course. Charles

of Orléans sold jewellery and plate to keep his soldiers from deserting. The English contingents in Armagnac service, including all their longbowmen, had already withdrawn. Their leader Walter Clifford refused to fight once he learned that the Earls of Arundel and Warwick were on the other side. As autumn turned to winter the supply situation became increasingly difficult. The rain came down in torrents, turning the ground into a sea of mud, slowing down the movement of men and supplies. The Burgundian garrisons at Saint-Denis and Senlis and in the Seine towns stopped them bringing in food from further afield. Clignet de Bréban was put in charge of assuring the flow of supplies to the Armagnac army. He performed his difficult task with brutal competence. Heavily armed foraging units seized supplies as far away as the Valois and the Soissonais. The resistance of the peasants was overcome by fire and slaughter. Punitive raids were directed against the main centres of local resistance. Many of the inhabitants were taken for ransom or left for dead. The peasants for their part abandoned their settlements and hid in the woods, from which they emerged to ambush the foraging parties and cut the throats of isolated soldiers.

For a time, morale in the Armagnac army held up well in spite of the difficulties. Their ranks were filled with the former friends and clients of Louis of Orléans. Their enthusiasm was sustained by an uncomprehending outrage against the injustice of a world in which the murderer of a royal prince could not only escape punishment but rule France with the support of much of its population. The sons of Louis of Orléans were still young enough to arouse compassion. Three miles away the mutilated trunk of Jean de Montaigu, to whom many of them had owed their careers and their fortunes, swung in the wind from the stone gibbet at Montfaucon. Montaigu's brother the Archbishop of Sens was a prominent figure among the Armagnac captains, memorably described by the chronicler Monstrelet with 'his steel helmet where there should have been a mitre, a coat of mail instead of his priestly robes, plate armour for a chasuble and an axe for a crozier'.[16]

For the first ten days after their arrival outside Paris the Armagnacs concentrated all their efforts on trying to capture Saint-Denis. They diverted the River Croult, which supplied the town's water and powered its mills. They tried to drain the moat. Their trebuchets hurled vast rocks into the town. They constructed mobile towers and shelters from which they launched bloody assaults against the walls. The garrison fought them all off until 11 October when they agreed to surrender in three days in return for a safe-conduct into Paris. When the day came the Count of Armagnac took possession of the town and made straight for the abbey. He forced

his way into the treasury with a crowbar and removed the treasure being stored there for the Queen in order to pay off some of the arrears of his men. For the defenders of Paris there was worse to come. On 13 October the Armagnacs captured the fortified bridge over the Seine at Saint-Cloud just beyond the western suburbs of the city. The bridge was a large timber structure guarded at its western end by a moated stone keep with a drawbridge on each side. Some 300 men hauled themselves across the river before dawn with ropes. A group of them climbed up the pontoons and onto the bridge between the drawbridge and the keep and then forced the riverside gate. The garrison was unprepared. The captain had fallen out with the Count of Saint-Pol and had stopped keeping watches. He was in bed with his wife when armed men burst into the room. The capture of the bridge enabled the Armagnacs to establish themselves on the left bank of the Seine, cutting off the principal route for supplies entering the city and considerably easing their own supply problems. The Bretons and Gascons poured over the bridge and ran amok among the villages of the southern suburbs, breaking into churches and granaries, wrecking houses and farm buildings.[17]

In the middle of October 1411 the rain was followed by frosts. Inside the French capital there was a severe shortage of firewood and of many basic foodstuffs. The mood was growing uglier. There was mounting impatience with the Count of Saint-Pol, an exceptionally cautious soldier with a reputation for letting opportunities pass him by. He was blamed for the loss of Saint-Cloud and the southern suburbs. To the radicals of Paris he seemed to have done very little with the thousands of professional soldiers at his disposal. To placate the gripers he allowed himself to be pressured into authorising some incautious sorties whose bloody failure only made matters worse. In the royal council the Provost of the Merchants and representatives of the butchers and their allies pressed for ever more extreme measures against the Armagnac leaders and their supporters. Ordinances were issued in the King's name declaring them to be outlaws and authorising anyone to arrest or attack them and seize their property with impunity. Proclamations and circulars accused them of planning to depose the King, disinherit his son and put a new dynasty on the throne or even to divide up France between them.

The chief victim of the ire of the mob was the Duke of Berry. He was not in Paris but with the Queen at her castle by the Seine at Corbeil. The Parisians regarded him as a covert Armagnac who was discreetly encouraging the princes fighting with the Duke of Orléans. His servants were abused and attacked if they ventured

into the streets in his livery. His principal residence in the city, the Hôtel de Nesle, was invaded by the mob, who looted its contents, walled up the openings and broke the bridge giving access to the Pré aux Clercs outside in case it was used to admit the Armagnacs. Finally the brothers Legoix led a mob several thousand strong to attack the Duke's magnificent suburban mansion at Bicêtre. They sacked the famous hall with its gilded decorations and painted portraits of popes, cardinals, kings and princes. They carried off the furniture and the glass windows. Then they lit fires and marched away leaving nothing behind them but charred walls.

By now Saint-Pol and his aristocratic associates were becoming concerned that they were losing control of the city to the mob. They sent messages to the Duke of Burgundy urging him to come quickly before things got out of hand. Meanwhile they removed Charles VI and his son to the fortified enclosure of the Louvre, far from the vulnerable open buildings of the Hôtel Saint-Pol, and assigned a hundred soldiers to guard them there.[18]

John the Fearless was already on his way. He now had just over 5,000 men-at-arms and nearly 3,800 bowmen at his back, a smaller host than before but better equipped and disciplined. Nearly a tenth of the men-at-arms were English and well over half the bowmen. With the *gros varlets* the whole force must have been about 12,000 strong. Unencumbered by heavy artillery or slow-moving infantry they made rapid progress across the plain of Picardy. On 16 October 1411, a week after leaving Péronne, John the Fearless entered Pontoise, a walled bridge-town on the Oise just eighteen miles from the capital. There were anxious councils of war in both camps. The Armagnacs were forced by John's advance to abandon the left bank of the Seine and concentrate their men north of the city. Some of them were for taking the initiative and laying siege to the Duke of Burgundy in Pontoise. It might be the only way of preventing him from entering Paris. But the Count of Armagnac, supported by the more experienced military men, was afraid of getting caught between the Duke of Burgundy in front and the Count of Saint-Pol behind. They thought that they should stand in prepared positions north of the city and wait to be attacked, with all the advantages of the defensive. So they dug themselves in on the hill of Montmartre, protected by improvised field fortifications around the village of La Chapelle at its base.

On the Burgundian side John the Fearless had his own strategic dilemmas. He was determined to enter the city. He counted on joining forces with the troops of the Count of Saint-Pol and Philip of Nevers before risking a decisive engagement. With the bridge of Saint-Cloud, the hill of Montmartre and the town of Saint-Denis all

in the hands of the Armagnacs, it would be too dangerous to try to approach the city directly by the north. The only alternative was to cross the Seine and enter Paris by the south. On the afternoon of 22 October the Duke of Burgundy and the Earl of Arundel rode together out of Pontoise. They crossed the Seine by the fortified bridge at Meulan and rode through the night to Paris, arriving outside the Porte Saint-Jacques in the early hours of the morning. They were met in front of the gate by all the main Burgundian captains in the city and a crowd of some 3,000 Parisians all armed to the teeth. The Rue Saint-Jacques was lit up by thousands of citizens holding lanterns as the army marched through it in full war array. The Duke of Burgundy made straight for the Louvre where he was received by the Dauphin and the incoherent Charles VI. The noise of horses' hooves resounded through the rest of the night as thousands of soldiers clattered through the streets looking for billets.[19]

The Earl of Arundel was assigned quarters in the north of the city in the large walled enclosure of the abbey of Saint-Martin-des-Champs. His men were lodged in the rambling outbuildings and gardens and in billets in the streets around. They cannot have felt very welcome. In spite of the strong Burgundian instincts of the Parisians they did not take to the Duke's foreign allies. Householders, never keen to put up soldiers, were particularly reluctant to take in Englishmen. The English for their part found the arrogance of the Parisian butchers insufferable. Charles VI enjoyed a few days of remission in the middle of November but only dimly understood what was happening. He presented valuable pearls and jewels to the English leaders and sat down with the Earl of Arundel at dinner but clearly had no idea who he was. 'Sick as he was,' an observer remarked, 'if anyone had mentioned the English to him he would have riled with fury.' Yet the English earned the grudging respect, if not of the King, then at least of the Parisians. On the day after their arrival they began a series of mounted raids into the plain north of the walls, accompanied by Parisian detachments under the command of Enguerrand de Bournonville. The first raid inflicted serious damage on the fortified encampment at La Chapelle and resulted in the death or capture of many of the Breton troops quartered there. The Armagnac captains were forced to withdraw all their troops from the exposed northern suburbs and canton them further north around the walls of Saint-Denis. Over the following days the English raiding parties spread further afield through the Île de France and the valleys of the Oise and the Marne, killing the Armagnac foraging parties and disrupting their exposed supply lines.[20]

Early in November 1411 John the Fearless held a council of war in his temporary headquarters in the confiscated mansion of the Duke of Bourbon by the Louvre. It was attended by his principal military and political councillors, the English captains and the leaders of the Parisians. The main problem about attacking the Armagnacs north of the city was that it would take the great forces at the Duke's disposal the best part of a day to issue forth from the narrow openings of the fortified gateways. During that time they would inevitably be observed and probably attacked. It was decided instead to leave the city by the unguarded southern gates and capture the bridge of Saint-Cloud. This was a much larger undertaking than the original capture had been. Since then the Armagnacs had put the place in a state of defence. They had posted some 1,500 troops there. They built a temporary timber bridge nearby to maintain communications between the two banks of the river. The small town behind the keep was unwalled but the Armagnacs had built improvised defences with timber barricades and lines of barrels filled with stones. Shortly before midnight on 9 November the Duke of Burgundy marched out of the southern gates of Paris accompanied by his brother the Count of Nevers and all the principal captains of his army including the Count of Saint-Pol, Enguerrand de Bournonville and the Earl of Arundel. They had with them several thousand troops of Picardy and Burgundy, much of the English expeditionary force and a corps of citizen volunteers. The host marched through the bitterly cold night, arriving within sight of Saint-Cloud at about eight o'clock in the morning. They first tried to destroy the bridge with fireboats, which were floated down the river against the timber arches and the wooden mill-wheels beneath. This was a failure. The garrison dowsed the flames before any damage was done. The fireboats had served mainly to alert the defenders to the forthcoming attack.

John the Fearless decided upon an immediate assault. He detached part of his force to take possession of the temporary bridge. The Parisians climbed the slope behind the town to set up their artillery. The rest were formed up in three battalions and sent to their starting positions around the town. As dawn broke the trumpets sounded the attack and the stone-throwers on the hillside began to hurl great rocks into the defences. The defenders were ready for them. But they were overwhelmed by sheer force of numbers. The advancing troops broke through the barricades at the edge of the town and forced them back into the streets. There was fierce hand-to-hand fighting as they approached the keep. The Armagnacs were holding a mounted reserve by the riverbank. But the English archers invaded the houses overlooking their positions,

broke through the roofs and fired down at them from above, wounding many of the horses which bolted in panic dragging their riders after them. About 600 or 800 Armagnacs lost their lives before their lines broke. Most of the rest made for the keep. The first men to reach it hauled up the drawbridge after them on the landward side, thus condemning their companions behind to certain death. Lowering the drawbridge on the river side they rushed onto the carriageway hoping to reach safety on the opposite bank. But there were so many of them that the timbers gave way, casting them into the freezing water below. A group of men stranded in the tower fought a hopeless defence for as long as their strength lasted. A number of Armagnacs had taken refuge in the tower of the parish church, which was eventually stormed with heavy losses by the Earl of Arundel and his men. It was about midday when the fighting finally stopped. The Burgundians passed through the town looking for survivors of the Armagnac garrison. About 300 were pulled out of their hiding places and hacked to death. The victorious allies took a great haul of booty, mainly warhorses and armour. The prisoners included many prominent retainers of the house of Orléans: the captain of Saint-Cloud, an old Orléanist retainer called Mansard du Bois; Arnauton des Bordes, a famous Gascon who had played a significant part in the campaigns in the south-west in 1406; and Guillaume Bataille, who had led the unsuccessful Armagnac mission to England earlier in the year. Colin Puiseux, the former captain of the bridge whose truculence had allowed the Armagnacs to capture it the month before, was found in the church tower disguised as a priest.[21]

The capture of the bridge of Saint-Cloud was decisive. The Armagnac princes at Saint-Denis were already marching to the bridge with about 2,000 men-at-arms. But as they passed Montmartre they learned from refugees coming towards them that they were too late. They marched on as far as the water's edge, to find the news confirmed by the sight of the victorious Burgundians arrayed on the opposite side. At Saint-Denis a hastily convened council of war resolved to abandon the campaign. It was the only realistic option. The Armagnacs had suffered heavy losses at Montmartre and Saint-Cloud. Their prestige had been shattered. They were outnumbered and hemmed in by the impregnable walls of Paris and the Burgundian garrisons of the Seine. There was nothing for it but to flee. Charles of Orléans evacuated Saint-Denis that night under cover of darkness. His engineers had constructed a timber bridge in portable sections which was hauled to the banks of the Seine just west of the town. Over this rickety structure Charles escaped with most of his army. Although it took them two days to

cross no one tried to stop them. Pierre des Essarts sortied from the city with Enguerrand de Bournonville and a large company of Picards, Englishmen and Parisians in pursuit, but they were diverted by the scent of booty. They fell on Charles's baggage train and invaded the deserted streets of Saint-Denis to loot what remained of the abbey's treasury. Over the following days the remnants of the Armagnac forces made for the Duke of Berry's heavily defended castle at Étampes on the Orléans road, some thirty miles south of the capital. Their leaders passed several days there considering future plans. They resolved to return to their domains and gather their resources for another campaign in the following spring. When the talking was over they left the castle and dispersed.[22]

The battle at Saint-Cloud had been fought with a savagery that bore out the old adage that the most pitiless wars are civil wars. There was no room for chivalrous convention in a war between men subject to the same allegiance. Their enemies were necessarily traitors. The collapse of even minimum standards of decency was most evident in the treatment of prisoners. About three-quarters of the defenders of Saint-Cloud lost their lives, many of them butchered after the fighting was over. A high proportion were gentlemen who would have been ransomed in a war of nations. This may be why most of the more notable prisoners including Colin Puiseux, Arnauton des Bordes and Mansard du Bois, were captured by Englishmen, who were indifferent to the cause in which they were fighting and more interested in money than revenge. When the English returned with their prisoners to Paris the French demanded that they be delivered up for punishment. The English refused. They were entitled to their prisoners, they said, and honour-bound to protect them. This response provoked a riot in which a number of Parisians were killed. It ended with the prisoners being seized and carried off to the Châtelet where many of them suffered ignominious deaths. Colin Puiseux and six others were executed at Les Halles and their heads paraded through the market on pikes. A household knight of the Duke of Bourbon was executed a few days later, followed by four Breton squires. Mansart du Bois, a much admired knight with friends in both camps, declined to plead for a pardon. He was brutally tortured in the Châtelet and then beheaded on the orders of the Duke of Burgundy along with five others. Guillaume Bataille would probably have suffered the same fate if his captors had not spirited him away. Arnauton des Bordes was held in prison for several months before being released in exchange for a heavy ransom. Others died obscurely of starvation or exposure in the prisons of Paris.

Vengeance was visited even on the dead. On 13 November, two

days after the army's return from Saint-Cloud, the whole clergy of Paris processed from the church of Sainte-Geneviève to hear the famous papal bull of 1362 against brigands and *routiers* read out in the cemetery of Notre-Dame. The Armagnac princes were excommunicated in accordance with its terms along with all who followed them. In the regions where the princes were powerful the decree was a dead letter. But in Paris it meant that the bodies of their men were refused a Christian burial. Those who had died in prison were collected in carts and thrown into a mass grave by the pig market in the shadow of the Louvre. In the open country around the capital the corpses of Armagnac soldiers were collected up and dumped in roadside ditches or just left to rot in the fields where they had fallen.[23]

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A great council attended by all the leaders of the Burgundian cause in Paris met over several days after the battle of Saint-Cloud to consider what to do next. The Burgundians were by now operating under severe financial constraints. John the Fearless had been granted a subsidy of 60,000 *écus* by the Estates of Flanders and had borrowed what he could from financiers in Paris and Bruges and from his friends, kinsmen and subjects. He had intended to take the rest from the royal treasury. But the treasury was empty. The Burgundian faction controlling the royal council had pawned most of what remained of the King's jewels at the end of August. They had devalued the coinage, which brought in some modest profits. In September they had proclaimed a *taille* of 300,000 *livres*, the first since 1406, but owing to the disordered state of the country had been unable to collect it. Against this background there could be no question of continuing operations on the scale of the past two months. It was decided to lay off most of the Duke's professional troops including almost all of the expensive English mercenaries. The Duke retained between 5,000 and 6,000 men including rather more than 500 Englishmen, mostly archers. The rest of the English expeditionary force was paid off with the proceeds of a forced loan imposed on senior civil servants in the capital. On 23 November 1411 the Earl of Arundel received the Duke's fulsome thanks for his services and his companies' wages to date together with lavish gifts of jewellery and plate and cash in lieu of the ransoms that his men had lost when their prisoners were snatched from them by the Paris mob. Then he marched away to Calais with his men.[24]

What remained of the Burgundian army was deployed in a series of local campaigns designed to seize the domains of prominent Armagnacs and eliminate their garrisons within reach of Paris. The

main target was the Duke of Berry. Like the Parisian leaders John the Fearless had persuaded himself that Berry had been behind all the efforts of the Armagnac princes since the peace of Bicêtre. He was probably wrong about that. The evidence suggests that the organising spirits were the young Orléans princes and the Count of Armagnac. But Berry was certainly unsympathetic to the regime in Paris and he had to be dealt with. He was the senior royal prince. He was probably the only one with the status and political influence to dilute the Burgundians' control of the royal council and to demand the ear of the King in his moments of lucidity. At the end of October 1411, shortly after the entry of John the Fearless into Paris, the royal council dismissed the Duke of Berry as royal Lieutenant in Languedoc, an office that he had held for more than ten years. It was a mortal blow to his power. The proceeds of royal taxation in Languedoc accounted for much of his income. The Duke of Berry did not take his dismissal lying down. He refused to accept its validity. From the castle of Montargis he published an open letter denouncing it as the work of 'false and disloyal traitors and liars' who were holding the King and his wife and son captive in the Louvre. Then he withdrew to his capital at Bourges. At a stroke Berry had been transformed from a passive supporter of the Armagnac coalition into an active participant.[25]

Towards the end of November 1411 the fifteen-year-old Dauphin Louis of Guyenne was knighted by his father-in-law and given nominal responsibility for the assault on his great-uncle's interests. The plan was to lead some 3,000 men-at-arms and 2,000 bowmen against the Duke of Berry's garrison at Étampes and the other Armagnac castles of the Beauce. A large mob of Parisians led by the butcher Thomas Legoix joined in this enterprise in addition to some 350 Englishmen under the command of Sir Gilbert Umfraville. It was more than they needed for the purpose, but the Duke was determined that the Dauphin should make an impact on this his first military campaign. The Armagnacs were in disarray after their precipitate flight from Paris. The only serious resistance was at Étampes where the Duke of Berry's lieutenant Louis de Bosredon breathed defiance as the army approached. However, the lower town opened its gates at once and the Duke of Burgundy's artillery and sappers brought down part of the curtain wall of the castle within three days. The garrison held out in the ancient twelfth-century keep for another five days and surrendered only when the besiegers were about to fire a mine beneath it. Louis de Bosredon appeared to negotiate the surrender wearing a tabard embroidered with the Duke of Berry's arms in gold braid. He was admitted to ransom. But several of his men were sent off to Paris to be executed

as traitors. The Duke of Berry's other garrison in the region at Dourdan entered into a conditional surrender agreement as soon as they learned the fate of Étampes. This left Charles d'Albret's powerfully garrisoned fortress of Dreux and the Duke of Berry's castle at Montargis as the only significant Armagnac strongholds between the Seine and the Loire. The brief campaign in the Beauce was followed by another acrimonious row about prisoners as the English tried to insist on the conventions of war between noblemen in the face of the venomous hatreds of the French civil war. When they were called upon to surrender their prisoners to the vengeance of the Parisian tribunals Sir Gilbert Umfraville replied, according to the English chronicler of his house, that 'they were not come thyther as bouchers … but as armes requires'. Prisoners, he said, were entitled to be protected and eventually to be released, 'paying as lawe of armes will'.[26]

Operations north of the Seine were entrusted to the Count of Saint-Pol. He had a smaller force of just over 500 men including seventy Englishmen. His main targets were the northern domains of the house of Orléans. Saint-Pol invaded Charles of Orléans' county of Valois at about the end of November 1411. Crépy-en-Valois surrendered, apparently without a fight. The captain of Pierrefonds, reputedly the strongest castle of the region, held out for two or three weeks before selling out for the value of his stores. This spelled the end of effective resistance. La Ferté-Milon, the impressive fortress begun by Louis of Orléans and recently completed by his son, opened its gates as soon as the news arrived of the fall of Pierrefonds. It was followed within barely a week by all the remaining walled places of the county. In the neighbouring county of Soissons Robert d'Esne, who had served for many years as the governor of the dukes of Orléans' domains in the county, conducted a ferocious defence from the walls of Coucy with the support of some fifty local noblemen. Coucy was not only the strongest but unquestionably the most famous of the great palaces that Louis of Orléans had built for himself on the King's largesse. Even today, after the comprehensive demolitions of the German army in 1917, the ruins of Coucy dominate the landscape. The place was battered by Saint-Pol's artillery and undermined by miners. A gatehouse collapsed. A corner tower crumbled, burying large numbers of the besiegers who were still working in the mine beneath it. Large fissures appeared in the masonry of the other towers and some of them began to lean. For the moment the curtain wall, with its massive base and deep foundations, held firm. The castle finally surrendered in the middle of February after a siege of about six weeks when two Burgundian councillors arrived from

Paris with 8,000 gold *écus* and promises of pardons and safe-conducts to buy out the garrison. In the midst of the ruined fortress Saint-Pol received the news that he had been appointed Constable of France in place of the dismissed lord of Albret and was girded with the sword of office by the Duke of Burgundy's emissaries.[27]

The remaining garrisoned castles of the Armagnacs in Champagne, Picardy and the valley of the Oise were left to be cleared by loyal local *baillis*. After the sudden collapse of the Armagnac cause outside Paris this was achieved with a speed and efficiency that must have surprised even the Burgundians. They finally recaptured the castle of Tonnerre from the recalcitrant Louis de Chalon. They occupied the Duke of Berry's county of Boulogne and the Duke of Bourbon's county of Clermont. They conquered most of the Beauce around Chartres. They overran Philip of Orléans' county of Vertus in Champagne. There was no serious resistance anywhere. The inhabitants of Clermont had hardly ever seen their Duke. They opened their gates at the first appearance of Burgundian troops and flooded the royal chancery with petitions excusing themselves for ever having supported the Armagnac cause. A solitary act of defiance struck the imagination of contemporaries because it was so unusual. At the hilltop fortress of Mont-Aimé outside Vertus, Philip of Orléans' lieutenant in Champagne Clignet de Bréban held out for several weeks. When the garrison had reached the end of its endurance Clignet took seven companions and escaped by charging through the Burgundian siege lines in full armour with lances couched. His brother, who was left in command, was less fortunate. He was captured a few days later and taken into Vitry to be beheaded. The rest of the garrison sold out for 6,000 *écus*.[28]

It remained for the Burgundian administration in Paris to stamp its image on the provinces beyond Paris and the Île de France. Over the winter there was a radical purge of the *baillis* and seneschals. No fewer than fifteen out of thirty-five were replaced. In nearly every case an Armagnac office-holder was dismissed in favour of a partisan of the Duke of Burgundy or his allies. By the end of January 1412 only eight men of known Armagnac sympathies were still in office and they were all in regions south of the Loire where the Dukes of Berry, Orléans or Bourbon were the dominant territorial magnates. The purge was shortly extended to the lower levels of the administration. A chance survival has preserved the record of an inquiry into the loyalty of officials in the Norman *bailliage* of Caux. They had aroused suspicion because of the number of troops recruited in the *bailliage* for the Duke of Orléans and because no one had lifted a finger to stop Duke of Bourbon from

crossing the Seine the previous April. The interrogations reveal all the techniques of political police work familiar to more recent times. Who did the suspect associate with? Who were his drinking companions? What were their political opinions? What did he say in unguarded moments about the Duke of Orléans? Or the Duke of Burgundy? How had he reacted to the news of events around Paris?[29]

In Languedoc three councillors of the Duke of Burgundy were appointed as commissioners to take control of the government out of the hands of the Duke of Berry's officers. They were chosen from among the Duke of Burgundy's most trusted friends and advisers: Guillaume de Vienne lord of Saint-Georges, Regnier Pot governor of the Dauphiné, and Pierre de Marigny, a Parisian lawyer whose main claim to fame was that he had assisted Jean Petit to compose his notorious *Justification*. The Duke of Berry responded by nominating the Count of Armagnac as his representative in Languedoc with instructions to defend his government against the interlopers. But Berry had few friends in Languedoc. He had left its administration to low-grade functionaries and treated it as a mere source of funds. When the Burgundian commissioners arrived in the region in December they reported that the old duke's dismissal had been received with universal satisfaction. They immediately began to replace his castellans and officials and to take control of the local revenues of the Crown. The Count of Armagnac did what he could to obstruct them. He ordered the towns of Languedoc to withhold cooperation. He declared that the commissioners from Paris were to be arrested on sight. He hired companies of *routiers* to attack the lands of those who submitted. But his orders were ignored and his messengers sent away with threats ringing in their ears. By the end of February 1412, the Limousin, the three principal seneschalsies of Languedoc and most of the adjoining provinces south of the Dordogne were firmly under Burgundian control.[30]

Encouraged by the success of these operations, in the new year the Duke of Burgundy and his creatures on the French royal council resolved to extend them into the centres of Armagnac power in the rest of France. In February 1412 the Burgundian government increased its armed strength to nearly 8,000. About a quarter of them were assigned to garrisons in the Île de France, the eastern Beauce and Champagne, the regions critical to the defence of Paris. The rest were now reorganised into three main task forces directed against the appanage of the Duke of Berry in Poitou, the lands of the Duke of Bourbon in central France and those of the Duke of Orléans and the Count of Alençon in Lower Normandy.[31]

The forces assigned to these task forces were relatively modest.

Their fortunes depended mainly on how much local support the Armagnac princes could muster in their own appanages. The fate of Languedoc had revealed the vulnerability of provinces governed by absentees without strong local roots. In the Bourbonnais and Beaujolais the Dukes of Bourbon had for generations been a visible presence, maintaining a splendid court and a large military retinue and distributing largesse with an open hand. A Savoyard adventurer called Amadée de Viry with a long-standing vendetta of his own against the Dukes of Bourbon was commissioned to invade their domains on behalf of the government in Paris. But he encountered stiff resistance and achieved very little. The pattern was the same in Lower Normandy. The Count of Alençon controlled a small but rich and tightly run appanage based on the towns of Alençon and Argentan and extending from the hills of Perche in the east to the march of Brittany at Domfront and Fougères. Here was another nobleman with a formidable local presence and a close-knit network of clients whose retainers and vassals fought ferociously in his interest. Enguerrand de Bournonville was charged with the task of occupying the Count's domains but made no impression on them at all. By comparison the castles of Charles of Orléans in the same region, Caen, Falaise, Vire and Saint-Sauveur, were merely revenue-gathering outposts of an empire whose heart lay far away in the middle Loire. They were effortlessly taken over by local officers of the Crown.[32]

John the Fearless's councillor Jacques d'Heilly was commissioned to take possession of Poitou, perhaps the richest part of the Duke of Berry's appanage, in conjunction with a perennial local rebel and troublemaker Jean Larchêveque lord of Parthenay. They had just 600 men-at-arms and 300 bowmen at their disposal. Jean de Berry had been a splendid, although rather occasional, presence in Poitou. His palace at Poitiers, whose magnificent hall still survives, was one of his grandest residences. But the province had a strong royalist tradition and was unwilling to follow him in his defiance of the Crown. The old duke proved to have no more friends there than he had in Languedoc. Jean de Berry's councillor and confidant Casin de Sereinvilliers had been left in command at Poitiers but even he was not prepared to disregard a formal summons by men bearing the King's sealed commission. The city opened its gates at the beginning of February 1412 without striking a blow. Over the following weeks the Burgundian commissioners made an effortless tour of the region, taking the surrenders of all the main towns and castles. The only serious resistance was at Chizé, a walled town on the banks of the River Boutonne where the surviving loyalists gathered to make a last stand. Chizé entered into a conditional surrender agreement

after a short siege. The defenders agreed to open their gates unless they were relieved on 31 March. A site was marked out for an arranged battle to decide the fate of the town. Jacques d'Heilly called for reinforcements. Enguerrand de Bournonville arrived from the Beauce with several hundred professional soldiers and a mob of volunteers from the streets of Paris. Their ranks were swollen by mercenaries from the march of Gascony and a corps of nearly 400 Englishmen most of whom had recently crossed the Channel in search of employment. The Armagnacs made a desperate attempt to relieve Chizé. Arthur de Richemont, who was in the process of recruiting an army in Brittany for the campaign that the Armagnacs planned for the spring, was urged to speed up his preparations. Charles of Orléans agreed to send a month's wages with an escort of 200 men. But the escort was ambushed on the road and the cash taken. Without the money the Bretons could not be persuaded to serve. So, when the appointed day arrived, Chizé surrendered. Niort followed a few days later. This brought the whole of Poitou under Burgundian control with the isolated exception of the imposing fortress of Lusignan in the south of the province.[33]

The successful campaign in Poitou was a striking reminder of the significance of the King's authority. But Charles VI himself had only the most limited understanding of what was being done in his name to some of his closest kinsmen. After five months of almost continuous madness he recovered his senses in the middle of January 1412 but remained weak and bedridden. Plied with tendentious history by his Burgundian attendants, he was readily persuaded of the wickedness of the Armagnac coalition. He ratified the acts of his council and sealed all that was put in front of him. On 13 February 1412 the King presided at a meeting of his council. They were called upon to authorise a considerable expansion of military operations in the spring and summer. Gripped by hubris, John the Fearless now proposed to have done with the Armagnac princes for good. In spite of his professed opposition to emergency taxation the modest *taille* imposed the previous September was now trebled, making a total of 900,000 *livres*, the heaviest war tax levied in France since the 1380s. Not all of this sum was collected. But with John the Fearless's nominees now in control in much of provincial France a large proportion of it was. In the year to February 1412 the French war treasurers had received 446,000 *livres* from the combined proceeds of the *aides* and *taille*. In the following year the figure rose to about 775,000 *livres*. In addition over the same period the royal treasury reimbursed John the Fearless 100,000 *livres* of war expenditure which he claimed to have drawn from his own resources. Almost all of this expenditure was

concentrated in the twelve-month period from August 1411 to July 1412. This means that John the Fearless must have spent something like 1,200,000 *livres* on fighting his internal enemies, a sum not far short of what the French state had spent annually on fighting the English before the truce of 1389.[34]

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These were terrible times for the Armagnac princes. They were among the greatest noblemen in France and traditionally the closest to the Crown. Yet they had been cut off from the King and expelled from their domains. Their networks of clients and protégés in the administration had been destroyed. Their access to government funds had been terminated. Across northern France their supporters were being attacked and murdered. Some towns like Dijon took their cue from Paris and banished known Orléanists, confiscating their property. In Champagne mobs attacked the castles of prominent Armagnacs. The Count of Roucy, one of the greatest lords of the region, was besieged in his castle at Pontarcy on the Aisne by more than 1,500 irate peasants with the overt encouragement of the royal *bailli* of Laon. In the lands that remained to them the princes found themselves attacked as traitors as their erstwhile friends began to slip away in search of better fortune elsewhere.[35]

The burden of rallying his battered party and financing the continuance of the war fell on the eighteen-year-old Charles of Orléans, already struggling to pay the arrears of the previous year's disastrous campaigns. He sold off or melted down most of what remained of his family's silver plate. He taxed his domains in the Loire valley. He continued to hope for wider recognition of the justice of his cause next time. The mercers of Orléans were making banners bearing the motto 'Justice!', with which the young duke planned to confront the Duke of Burgundy in the spring. An order for 4,200 cavalry pennons suggests that an army of at least 10,000 men was planned, which was much the same as he and his allies had deployed in 1411. But when the leaders of the coalition came to assess their position at the beginning of 1412 it was apparent that it would not be enough to confront the great armies that the Duke of Burgundy was now able to recruit. In desperation the princes resolved upon another attempt to recruit an English army for their cause. To do this they would have to outbid the Burgundians, with their extensive resources and established connections in England.[36]

It is unlikely that either of the warring parties in France understood the complex and volatile political situation in England. When the Earl of Arundel left England the Prince of Wales had been

the dominant figure in government. He had consistently favoured an alliance with the Duke of Burgundy. But although Arundel's expedition had contributed much to the triumph of Burgundian arms, it had achieved very little for England. The diplomats who had accompanied him to Arras had been unable to extract anything but money in return for his services. By the time that Arundel returned to England the ailing Henry IV had succeeded in wresting power back from the Prince and his friends. The circumstances are obscure, like all of the court intrigues of Henry IV's declining years, for the chroniclers observed a prudent reticence on the subject. On 3 November 1411, while the Earl of Arundel was in Paris, Parliament opened at Westminster. As the day approached it became obvious that the King was too ill to preside in person at the opening. The Prince appears at this point to have confronted his father and suggested that it was time for him to abdicate. He told him, according to the only surviving account, that he was 'no longer capable of acting for the honour and profit of the realm'. The King indignantly refused. During the sessions of the assembly the Prince and Henry Beaufort Bishop of Winchester called a meeting of the leading lay and ecclesiastical peers to consider the issue. One of them, they said, would have to summon up the courage to persuade the King to go. He was disfigured by 'leprosy' and therefore unfit to perform the public duties of his office.

In the course of November, however, Henry IV succeeded in reasserting his authority. He mustered enough strength to make occasional appearances in Parliament. In some of them he even showed his old assertive style. On 30 November he dismissed the Prince and the entire royal council. This was followed in the closing days of the Parliament by the replacement of all the principal officers of state. Sir Thomas Beaufort was replaced as Chancellor by Archbishop Arundel and the Treasurer by the household knight Sir John Pelham, both of them close to the old King and no friends of his eldest son. Henry of Monmouth could hardly be excluded from the public life of the realm. But much of his influence passed to his younger brother Thomas of Lancaster. These changes profoundly destabilised the English government. Thomas of Lancaster, then twenty-five years old, had for some years been the King's favourite son. He was a soldier of reckless courage and furious energy, but a man of poor judgment and little appetite for business who was on bad terms with both the Prince and his Beaufort friends. Henry of Monmouth did not take well to being supplanted by him. As the heir to an ailing King and much the abler of the two brothers he naturally commanded the loyalty of the young and ambitious. These men were looking to the future. By comparison, apart from Thomas

of Lancaster, the King's new ministers were very much men of the previous generation who had been sidelined during the Prince's two-year ministry and had no reason to look forward to his accession as King.[37]

What lay behind this clash of wills is difficult to say, but the question how to exploit the current divisions in France must have been a large part of it. At the beginning of December 1411, immediately after the dismissal of the councillors, Henry IV declared his intention once again of taking an army under his personal command to France. The Convocation of Canterbury, which was meeting at the time in St Paul's Cathedral, was told that the campaign was expected to last six months and to cost at least £100,000. This suggests that he expected to fight for his own account and not as a mercenary for either of the rival parties in France. In the event this proved to be unaffordable. The final instalment of the previous Parliamentary subsidy, voted in May 1410, was in the process of collection but was already fully committed to the defence of the Welsh and Scottish marches. The wool subsidy was largely committed to the defence of Calais. The Commons were reluctant to grant another subsidy so soon after the last one and eventually conceded only a modest tax on incomes from land which took a long time to assess and brought in less than £1,400. The Convocations of the clergy added a half-subsidy of their own, worth about £8,000, bringing the total of new funds to less than a tenth of the estimated cost of the proposed army. By the time that Parliament dispersed on 19 December it was already clear that the only way of intervening decisively in France was to sell the services of an English expeditionary force to one of the rival parties.[38]

The Duke of Burgundy had already prepared his bid. With the Armagnac forces dispersed and on the defensive he anticipated a campaign of sieges. His need of English troops was more modest than the year before when he had had to be ready for a pitched battle. His main purpose was to ensure that the English did not fight for his enemies. Early in December 1411 he appointed the Bishop of Arras to lead an embassy to England. He was accredited not just to Henry IV but to Joan of Navarre, Henry of Monmouth and various other English notables. The bishop was authorised to repeat the offer of the hand of John's daughter Anne for the Prince of Wales. But the Armagnac princes were prepared to offer more. Meeting at Bourges on 24 January 1412 the Dukes of Berry, Orléans and Bourbon and the Count of Alençon named their own ambassadors and drew up their instructions. They were authorised to negotiate with 'Henry by the grace of God King of England and his illustrious

sons', a dignity that they had never previously been willing to accord them. Their appointed spokesman was a protégé of the Duke of Berry, the Augustinian preacher Jacques Legrand. He and his colleagues were told to appeal to Henry IV's sense of justice. He was to recount the history of the last four years since the murder of Louis of Orléans and to explain how the Duke of Burgundy had seduced the credulous inhabitants of Paris, imposed his will on the King and the Dauphin and launched a vicious campaign of persecution against his enemies. Once they had done this they were to ask to speak to the English King in private and get down to the real purpose of their visit. The Armagnac princes wanted the support of an English army of 4,000 men for service against the Duke of Burgundy. In return they were prepared to enter into a military alliance with Henry against his enemies in Scotland, Wales and Ireland and in France itself and to negotiate a permanent peace 'on terms which would satisfy him'. These terms, it was made clear, would include large territorial concessions in the south-west. It is clear that much was left to the discretion of the ambassadors. They were supplied with blank charters already executed by the four princes and sealed with their seals.

The moving spirit behind these proposals appears to have been John Count of Alençon, who was emerging as a power in the Armagnac camp second only to Bernard of Armagnac. The 27-year-old Count had been a protégé of Louis of Orléans in his lifetime and was one of the most consistent supporters of his house after his death. 'Without him,' wrote his contemporary biographer, 'the good and holy cause of Orléans could not have been sustained.' It was Alençon who made the arrangements for getting the ambassadors to England and receiving an English expeditionary force in France. Neither the Count of Armagnac nor Charles d'Albret were present at Bourges. But Albret added his authority later, and Armagnac sent his own representative, Jean de Loupiac, who had been party to the previous attempt to raise an English army for the Armagnac cause. The Duke of Brittany was also consulted but he was as equivocal as ever. He asked Jean de Loupiac to represent his interests and sent his own agent to England as well, but neither of them seems to have had authority to commit him to anything.[39]

The Burgundian ambassadors arrived in London at the beginning of February 1412. They were joined there by the indispensable Jean de Kernezn, who knew his way around the English court better than anyone else in the Duke's service. The Prince of Wales took the lead in the negotiations in spite of his fall from power. Since he had conducted the negotiations of the previous year and the main point of discussion was his possible marriage with a Burgundian princess,

it could hardly have been otherwise. The Burgundian emissaries were put up at Coldharbour, the grand mansion at the water's edge just upstream of London Bridge which had recently become the Prince's London residence. A commission dominated by his friends was appointed to treat with them there. They included Hugh Mortimer the Prince's Chamberlain and Thomas Langley Bishop of Durham, one of the few members of his ministry to survive the recent cull. Queen Joan actively seconded their efforts. After a month of negotiation the two sides appear to have reached agreement on the despatch of another expeditionary force to fight for John the Fearless. The first troops left England to join the Burgundian army in March. There was also an agreement in principle on the Prince's marriage to Anne of Burgundy. Then on 10 April all of these arrangements were abruptly countermanded by the King. The English troops who had already left for France were peremptorily recalled. Henry IV expected to receive a better offer.[40]

The Armagnac ambassadors had probably sent him an outline of their proposals in advance. But they themselves nearly came to grief before leaving France. They had decided to wait before embarking on their journey until the Burgundians had left. As they waited rumours of their mission began to leak out. Setting out from Alençon in mid-March they were stopped by the *bailli* of Caen with a posse of soldiers as they made their cumbrous way across the plain of Maine to take ship in Brittany. The envoys made off on the *bailli*'s approach and escaped. But Jacques Legrand was forced to abandon his baggage, which contained copies of his confidential instructions and some of the precious blank charters. The Duke of Burgundy immediately sent out ships to patrol the Channel in the hope of intercepting the ambassadors at sea. They finally had to be collected from Brittany by a fleet of armed ships sent from England. As a result of these mishaps they did not reach London until the beginning of May. They were assigned quarters in the Dominican house at Blackfriars, where the King's council was in the habit of meeting. There the negotiations were conducted in great haste under the shadow of the rapidly developing situation across the Channel. The documents taken from Jacques Legrand's baggage had already been laid before the French royal council at a packed and emotional meeting in the Hôtel Saint-Pol on 6 April. Reports of their contents quickly spread through the French capital where they provoked outrage and threats of violence against real or imagined Armagnac partisans. The Duke of Berry and the Count of Alençon were held responsible. A double campaign was announced, one wing to be deployed against Alençon in the west and the other against Berry beyond the Loire. The Count of Saint-Pol left Paris a

few days after the council meeting with more than 3,000 men to invade the county of Alençon. Thousands more assembled in the plain south of Paris to march on Bourges under the command of John the Fearless himself. On 6 May 1412 Charles VI, accompanied by the Dauphin, the Duke of Burgundy and a crowd of captains, received the *Oriflamme* from the Abbot of Saint-Denis.[41]

At the London Blackfriars the ambassadors of the French princes believed their cause to be at the edge of the abyss. They were not inclined to haggle. They conceded everything almost at once. They agreed to the restoration of all the provinces of Aquitaine which had been ceded to Edward III and then reconquered by Charles V. The domains of the Duke of Berry in Poitou and the Duke of Orléans in Angoumois would be retained by them for life and would vest in the English Crown on their deaths. This was subject to a carve-out for the four strategic fortresses of Poitiers, Niort, Lusignan and Chateuneuf-sur-Charente which would be ceded to Henry IV at once. Twenty other major royal fortresses of Aquitaine were identified for immediate transfer to the English King's representatives. Some 1,500 others belonging to the Armagnac princes and their followers would be held by them as vassals of the King of England. The thorny question of the feudal status of Aquitaine was left vague. The treaty merely provided that Henry and his heirs would hold the enlarged duchy 'as freely as any of his forebears had held it', which was itself a contentious issue. In theory, however, these remarkable proposals gave the English at a stroke most of what they had fought and argued for in vain for the past forty years. In return, all that was required of them was an army of 1,000 men-at-arms and 3,000 archers for three months. The entire cost was to be met from the coffers of the Armagnac princes from the time that the army reached the appointed meeting place in France. There was initially some doubt about where this meeting place would be. Until a late stage of the negotiations it was assumed that the English expeditionary force would sail for Bordeaux and join forces with the Armagnac princes on the Gascon march, in Poitou or the county of Angoulême. This plan was never realistic. The shipment of 4,000 men with their hangers-on, horses and equipment round the Breton cape would have required more ocean-going ships than England had available and cost more than Henry IV could afford. By the time the terms were finalised it had been overtaken by events. The Armagnac positions in Poitou and Angoulême had collapsed and attention had shifted to the defence of the princes' domains in Berry and the Loire. So it was agreed that the English army would meet the princes at Blois, a town on the Loire belonging to Charles of Orléans with an important stone

bridge.

Henry IV was highly satisfied with the terms. According to the chronicler Thomas Walsingham, when his councillors told him what was on offer he rose from his seat, clapped his hands in delight and said to Chancellor Arundel: 'Now is the time to enjoy God's bounty and by this simple negotiation to enter France and resume our rightful inheritance.' The agreement is commonly known as the treaty of Bourges, which is the place given in the text. But its terms were in fact transcribed in England onto the forms which the four leading Armagnac princes had signed and sealed in blank at Bourges before their envoys left France. Bernard of Armagnac and Charles d'Albret had not executed the blanks and so their representatives made separate declarations on their behalf. The counterparts were formally exchanged in London on 18 May 1412. The Prince of Wales had had nothing to do with any of this and was palpably embarrassed. He addressed an apologetic letter to the Duke of Burgundy explaining what had happened. He would personally have preferred to proceed with the agreement reached with his ambassadors in February, he wrote. But the decision was not his and the Armagnacs had made offers which his father had found impossible to refuse.[42]

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By the time that the English had reached agreement with the Armagnac princes the campaign in France had already begun. From the outset the Armagnacs put up a much more vigorous defence than even they had expected. The first clashes occurred in the west. The Count of Alençon's domains in Lower Normandy and Perche were the target of coordinated offensives from two directions. The Count of Saint-Pol marched across the region at the end of April 1412 and laid siege to the ancient but powerful fortress of Domfront. The Duke of Anjou, who had been promised the lands of the house of Alençon as his reward, joined him there. John of Alençon, his forces vastly outnumbered, retreated into Brittany while his lands were wasted by his enemies. Yet his followers fought back vigorously as they had the year before. Saint-Pol and his captains took three of the Count's castles including his magnificent mansion at Bellême, but failed to dislodge the determined garrison of Domfront. They made no attempt on the principal walled towns. One of Saint-Pol's lieutenants approached the walls of Argentan, then 'looked at it from afar and withdrew'. The one notable success of their campaign was the defeat of Raoul de Gaucourt, one of Charles of Orléans' most experienced captains, who had been sent with 800 men-at-arms to support the defence. Gaucourt's force fell

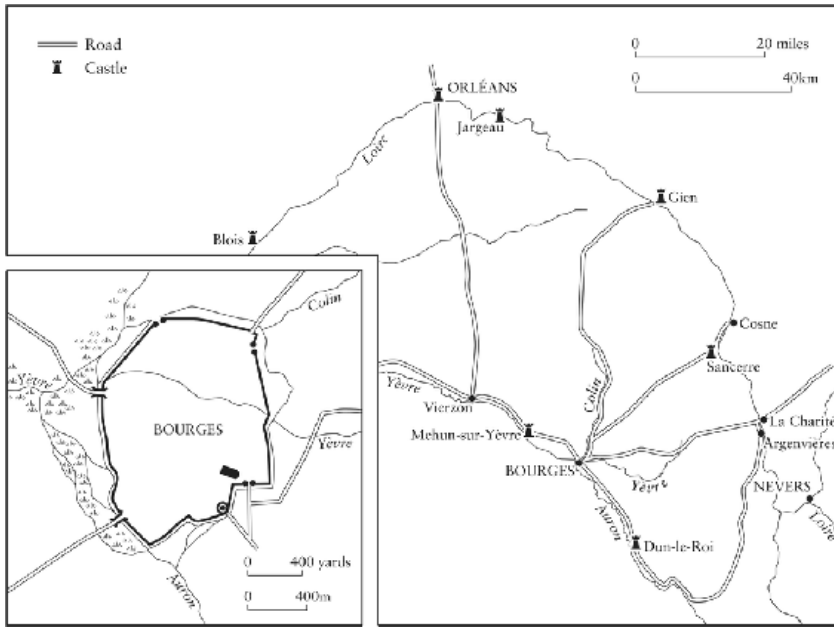
into a dawn ambush near Saint-Rémy-du-Val on 10 May 1412 and was almost entirely wiped out in an exceptionally brutal battle. The incident represented a loss of face for the Duke of Orléans and earned Saint-Pol a hero's welcome when he returned to Paris a few days later. But he had actually achieved very little. As soon as he withdrew the Count of Alençon returned from Brittany with Arthur de Richemont and some 1,600 Breton men-at-arms. They installed themselves around the Count's capital at Alençon, re-established the Count's authority in the region and waited for the expeditionary force from England.

This brief campaign marked a fresh landmark in the embitterment of the French civil war as old friendships were broken beyond repair and families were irretrievably divided. Gilles de Bretagne had been present at the angry council meeting in Paris when Jacques Legrand's captured papers had been read out at the moment when his elder brother Arthur de Richemont was recruiting troops to fight the Burgundians in Normandy. They exchanged 'high words' when Gilles visited his brother in the hope of detaching him from the Armagnac cause. At Saint-Rémy men fought against their fathers and brothers. Jeannet de Garencières, who had been Louis of Orléans' godson, fought with the Armagnacs. When his father, who was on the other side, recognised him among the prisoners he had to be restrained from killing him.[43]

The main objective of the Burgundians in the summer of 1412 was to deal with the Duke of Berry, who had shut himself behind the walls of Bourges. Believing that he was the animating spirit behind the Armagnac coalition, the royal council had resolved to accept nothing less than his unconditional surrender. Their army, which had mustered outside Melun, began its march south on 14 May 1412. It was accompanied by the King, the Dauphin, the Dukes of Burgundy and Anjou, the Provost of Paris Pierre des Essarts, and the official historiographer, Michel Pintoin of Saint-Denis. At its highest point the payroll strength was about 7,000 men-at-arms and 1,200 bowmen representing a total of at least 15,000 fighting men when the *gros varlets* and other low-grade combatants are included. Although the royal council had expressed great indignation about the Armagnac plans to hire mercenaries from England, their own troops included at least 300 English archers who had either stayed behind after the departure of the Earl of Arundel or enlisted later in defiance of Henry IV's commands. There was also a corps of 500 Scots, four-fifths of them archers. Every attempt was made to maintain the pretence that this was the King's army under the King's command. Charles VI was barely fit enough to ride. But John the Fearless needed his symbolic presence and insisted on his taking

his position at the head of the van. The army marched across the open plain of the Gâtinais into the county of Nevers and at the end of May crossed the Loire into Berry by the great stone bridge at La Charité-sur-Loire.[44]

Paris was in a state of high excitement. The citizens believed that if the Burgundians were defeated the Armagnacs would exact a terrible revenge on them for the violence done to their supporters. They had the *Oriflamme* that had been unfurled at the battle of Roosebeke in 1382 brought into the city from Saint-Denis along with all the most holy of the abbey's relics. On 31 May, after the news had arrived of the crossing of the Loire, the friars of the Franciscan and Dominican convents took the famous relic of the True Cross from the Sainte-Chapelle and processed through the capital followed by the entire corps of the Parlement walking two by two in their robes of office and an estimated 30,000 citizens in their bare feet. The University viewed current events with special anxiety. They had been uncompromising in their support of John the Fearless and had a great deal to lose. When a few days later they organised their own procession, the line of robed academics, students and schoolchildren with candles in their hands snaked through the city for eight miles from the convent of the Mathurins on the left bank to the abbey of Saint-Denis beyond the northern gates. These immense processions, at once political demonstrations, invocations of the Almighty and exercises in communal solidarity, were organised every day during the King's absence with the army and would become a regular feature of Parisian life in the years of crisis to come.[45]



5 The siege of Bourges, May–July 1412

The defence was directed from Bourges by the Duke of Berry. The Duke was no soldier but he was assisted by experienced captains including Charles d'Albret, John Duke of Bourbon and that bold fighter Raoul lord of Gaucourt. Bourges was filled with refugees of the Parisian proscriptions of the past year. For a man with Jean de Berry's commitment to the dynasty, armed confrontation with what was ostensibly a royal army commanded by the King and the Dauphin in person was a terrible experience, perhaps the worst crisis in a long life devoted to the avoidance of discord and the pursuit of comfort and beauty. He took the only line that he could take, that he was not resisting the King but only the Duke of Burgundy. Even at this late stage he put out feelers in the hope of finding a way out which would not put him at the mercy of his terrible nephew. The chronicler of Saint-Denis, who was in the King's entourage, believed that Charles and many of those around him would have welcomed these approaches had it not been for the unbending attitude of John the Fearless. But John, determined to stick to the policy of unconditional surrender, pressed on regardless. The army quickly overran the outlying garrisons which had been stationed on the eastern and southern approaches to Bourges. The first sustained confrontation occurred at Dun-le-Roi, the last garrisoned fortress before the city. Dun was defended by a garrison of 400 Gascon and Italian *routiers* under the command of one of the Duke of Bourbon's bastard half-brothers. But it was an old fortress with high walls and vulnerable to artillery fire. The great bombard

Griette, which had destroyed the gatehouse of Ham the year before, was hauled up. It took twenty men to move it, and the detonations could be heard four miles away 'like reverberations from hell'. On the first day a direct hit demolished a large part of a tower. On the second it breached another tower in two places and brought down a considerable section of wall. The garrison was instructed by the Duke of Berry to submit and withdrew amid screams of abuse from the massed ranks of Burgundians outside. As John the Fearless marched on to Bourges a herald went ahead to call on the city to surrender. The Duke of Berry replied that he would willingly surrender to the King or the Dauphin but not to those whom they had about them. John the Fearless arrived before Bourges on 11 June 1412 to find the walls manned and banners flying from every tower.[46]

Bourges was a substantial walled city in the centre of the vast plain of Berry. Viewed from the south, the direction from which the Burgundian army approached, its skyline owed much to Jean de Berry's forty-year tenure. There was the western gable of the cathedral with its great rose window and its clock, both commissioned by the Duke; the immense hall and palace dominating the upper town, still incomplete in 1412, today buried beneath the Préfecture of the Cher; the two-storey Sainte-Chapelle, even larger than its famous archetype in Paris, where the Duke intended to be buried, today gone like the palace. The city was defended by a complete circuit of walls dating from the end of the twelfth century, reinforced with a tall circular keep, five powerful gateways and more than forty towers. On the west side the walls stood over the River Yèvre and its tributary the Auron. Two fortified bridges crossed the rivers, giving access to an expanse of marshland and to the open country beyond. In June 1412 these ancient but still formidable defences were manned by about 1,500 men-at-arms and some 400 archers including sizeable contingents of Gascon and English mercenaries. The situation of Bourges made a complete blockade hard to achieve. The besieging army would have been divided by the bogs and watercourses of the Yèvre and the Auron, inviting defeat in detail by sorties from the town. In practice it could be taken only by assault from the plain on the east and south sides. It was there that the Duke of Burgundy set up his camp and sited his artillery. Shortly gaping holes began to appear in the walls and turrets. Huge balls of cut stone were hurled into the city, demolishing whole houses, smashing timber buildings like matchwood and creating wide fissures in stone structures. Over the following weeks the Duke of Berry had to move his headquarters seven times to escape the devastation. Morale among the terrified

inhabitants was low. The professional soldiers bore up better but they were mainly interested in their pay, which was greatly in arrears. The Duke of Berry, whose revenues had been severely reduced by the loss of Languedoc and Poitou, had already been reduced to pawning the jewels of his palace chapel. As the siege continued he was obliged to raid the treasuries of the city's churches, selling the precious stones from the reliquaries and melting down their silver mounts to be minted into coins for the garrison.[47]

The besiegers were in no better case. Their difficulties began almost as soon as they arrived. The garrison had mounted cannon and large fixed catapults on the walls. They inflicted heavy casualties and forced the besiegers to withdraw their siege lines out of range. But by placing their lines further back they exposed themselves to murderous sorties from the gates across the open ground east of the city. The besiegers tried to construct pontoon bridges across the rivers in the hope of closing off access to the city by the west and north. But the soft ground made the engineers' task impossible and the attempt had to be abandoned. Meanwhile the besiegers' supply situation deteriorated. The weather was terrible for men working in the open. Torrential rain throughout the spring was followed by a long heatwave in late June and July. The streams and wells dried up. Water had to be fetched over great distances. Within days the army had eaten all the cattle to be found in the region and stripped the fields and trees bare for twenty miles around. The purveyors had to bring in supplies from the Nivernais and Burgundy via the bridge of La Charité in heavily defended convoys. Cash from the treasurers in Paris came by the same route. Even so the convoys were frequently attacked by sortie parties from the city or by the powerful Armagnac garrisons at Sancerre and Gien to the north. The supply situation eased somewhat after the capture of Sancerre at the end of June but food remained scarce and dear throughout the siege.[48]

In addition to his logistical problems the Duke of Burgundy was encountering mounting political ones. Unlike the Burgundian army of 1411, which had been recruited entirely from his own domains and those of his allies, the army of 1412 had been brought together by the King's officers. Its members had been found in every province of northern and western France. Not all of them were devoted to John's cause. A number of captains were there only out of respect for the authority of the Crown. Many of them resented John the Fearless's rejection of compromise, his use of the King as a cipher and his determination to drive the wretched monarch beyond his physical endurance. Their views were shared by a number of

people in the royal household. The Armagnacs were well aware of these difficulties. They were kept informed by well-placed friends in the enemy camp. Shortly after the beginning of the siege one of the King's private secretaries, Geoffroy de Villon, began to send messages into the city suggesting that a sortie might succeed in capturing the King and the Dauphin and bringing them into Bourges. A number of soldiers and body servants of the King were in on the plot. They spread rumours about the camp of a truce in order to lower the guard of the watch. Raoul de Gaucourt then led a sortie by more than a thousand men, about half the garrison. They left by the bridges on the open west side and made their way to the encampment of the vanguard where the King and the Dauphin were. There was a pitched battle at the edge of the encampment in which Gaucourt lost a quarter of his strength before being driven back to the city. The role of Geoffroy de Villon was discovered by interrogating prisoners captured in the raid. He and two squires involved were beheaded a few days later. But this example did not end the divisions in the royal army. Shortly afterwards some 200 men switched sides and fled for gates of the city where arrangements had been made to admit them.[49]

All of the Duke of Burgundy's problems came to a head in the second week of July 1412. Dysentery had begun to spread through the camp as the heat intensified. Shortly a serious epidemic took hold. In the space of a few weeks some 2,000 men died of disease. Youth and fitness were no defence. The victims included some of the army's leading captains, among them the King of Navarre's brother Pierre Count of Mortain and the Duke of Brittany's young brother Gilles. The survivors sickened amid the stench of rotting corpses. Panic set in. Desertions added to the Burgundians' losses. The King and the Duke of Burgundy were forced to withdraw from their encampment outside the city walls and to establish a new base several miles back where the air was thought to be healthier. In these conditions doubts about the wisdom of the Duke of Burgundy's inflexible strategy resurfaced. Demands for a compromise were openly voiced among the noblemen about the King. To the fury of the Duke the Dauphin himself was won over to their view. He directed that the artillery should avoid hitting Jean de Berry's palace. When John questioned this order he protested that the war had lasted too long. The defenders of Bourges were 'his uncle, his cousins and his closest kin by whom he might one day be well served in his affairs'. It was the first recorded breach between the Dauphin and his father-in-law. John the Fearless had angry words with the Duke of Bar, whom he suspected of putting him up to it. The Duke of Bar, whose brother was fighting for the

Armagnacs, was notoriously ambivalent about John's cause. All of these problems were now complicated by the prospect of English military intervention.[50]

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Henry IV's ministers had begun to prepare the expeditionary force at the beginning of May 1412, even before final agreement had been reached with the Armagnac ambassadors. The recruitment of companies and the requisitioning of ships were practised routines which generally took between two and three months. The original plan was to land the army in France early in July. However, the ink had hardly dried on the treaty before the preparations were engulfed by a fresh political crisis which delayed it by several weeks. The problem arose out of ill-feeling between the Prince of Wales and his father and brother. Henry IV had originally intended to take command himself, accompanied by the Prince with a separate force of his own. The Prince, however, made no secret of the fact that he regarded himself as bound in honour to the Duke of Burgundy. He had opposed the treaty with the Armagnacs and he remained in contact with the John the Fearless after it had been made. Partly for this reason and partly to save money, he had been given only a minor role with a retinue so small as to be insulting. After what was evidently a bruising negotiation the Prince's retinue was eventually increased. However, all of these arrangements had to be revisited when it became clear that Henry IV was physically incapable of commanding an army. His health rapidly deteriorated during the summer. He could no longer either walk or ride. His council, profoundly suspicious of the Prince, was appalled by the prospect of his taking command in his father's place. They advised the King to appoint Thomas of Lancaster instead. This provoked a damaging row. The Prince was furious at being supplanted by his younger brother and appears to have pressed for the cancellation of an expedition that he had never liked anyway. At the same time the government was having difficulty finding the money to pay the shipping costs and the troops' advances. Henry's ministers put it about that the Prince and his friends were actively obstructing their preparations. This may well have been true. The same reports reached the ear of Jean de Kernezn, who was now for practical purposes the Duke of Burgundy's resident agent in England and had excellent sources of information in the households of the Prince and his stepmother Joan of Navarre. Jacques Legrand, who had stayed behind in London to represent the interests of the Armagnac princes, lobbied for the project with mounting desperation.

For some time the future of the expedition hung in the balance.

Writing to the Duke of Burgundy on 31 May 1412, the Earl of Arundel thought that the outcome was still uncertain. But by 10 June the King had settled the issue. The council succeeded in borrowing part of the money from the City of London and raised the rest by a campaign of forced loans. The expedition was confirmed and Thomas of Lancaster was formally appointed to command it. He was also made Lieutenant in Guyenne and charged with the task of taking possession of the provinces which the Armagnacs had promised to restore once they had disposed of the Duke of Burgundy. To give him the status required for these important functions Thomas was raised to the peerage as Duke of Clarence. The King's cousin the Duke of York and his half-brother Sir Thomas Beaufort (who now became Earl of Dorset) were nominated as the new Duke's lieutenants. The Prince of Wales was excluded altogether. He took this very badly. He withdrew in high dudgeon to his estates in the Midlands to confer with his supporters and to discuss the wider implications. There were worrying signs of a broader assault on his position by his father's councillors. An investigation was launched into his stewardship of the finances of Calais which concluded that he had retained large sums due to the garrison. There were even rumours that they were pressing the King to disinherit him, presumably in favour of Thomas. Whether there was any truth in these rumours is unclear but the Prince and his friends believed them and resolved upon a show of strength. On 17 June Henry of Monmouth issued an extraordinary public manifesto from Coventry in which he presented a highly tendentious account of recent events, denied the accusations that had been made against him and protested his support for the campaign in France. His father's councillors were denounced as 'sons of iniquity, disciples of dissension, supporters of schism, disseminators of ill-feeling and fomentors of discord'. At the end of June the Prince appeared in London accompanied by a great number of prominent friends and an intimidating personal retinue to demand the punishment of his detractors. He probably hoped to pressure his father into replacing his councillors. If so he was disappointed. The King fobbed him off with a promise to refer the matter to the next Parliament and in the end the issue was dropped.[51]

Reports of these events reached France garbled and late. The Duke of Burgundy was of course aware of the Armagnac mission to London from Jacques Legrand's intercepted papers. But the first that he knew about its outcome was in the middle of June when a copy of a letter from Henry IV to the Four Members of Flanders was brought to him at Bourges. The letter, written from Westminster shortly before the treaty was finalised, referred to the offers that the

Armagnacs had made to him and informed the Four Members of his plans for military operations in conjunction with the Armagnac princes. Invoking the Anglo-Flemish truce Henry called on the Flemings to withhold all assistance from the Duke of Burgundy in his military enterprises in France. A few days later one of the Prince of Wales's chaplains arrived in the Burgundian camp at Bourges bearing an apologetic letter from his master reporting what had happened and telling John that he was unable in the circumstances to take their current negotiations any further. The details were filled in by Jean de Kernezn. His report, addressed to Charles VI from England, must have reached the camp at Bourges in early July. 'Make speed to complete your operations,' he wrote, 'for the English army is assembling and their fleet is ready to sail for France.'[52]

The arrival of an English army outside Bourges would have transformed the military balance. The Duke of Anjou and the Count of Penthièvre, who were John the Fearless's principal allies among the higher nobility, were on their way to reinforce him with about 2,500 men. Even so the combined forces of the English, the garrison of Bourges and the troops of Arthur de Richemont and Charles of Orléans would have outnumbered them. In a pitched battle the formidable corps of 3,000 longbowmen would probably have been decisive. The Duke of Burgundy was forced to abandon his policy of unconditional surrender and settle with the Duke of Berry before the English arrived. A short truce was agreed. The Dukes of Berry and Burgundy met in a carefully prepared enclosure in an atmosphere redolent of mutual distrust. The two sides were separated by a timber barrier. The Duke of Berry appeared in chain mail and helmet, sword and axe in hand. 'I admit that I have done wrong,' he is reported to have said to his nephew, his eyes full of tears, 'but you have unquestionably done worse.' As he left he added: 'In your father's time we never needed a barrier between us like this.' 'It is not my doing,' John replied. The negotiations which followed extended over several days and divided both sides. Among the Armagnacs in the city there was the familiar division between those who were mainly concerned to recover their confiscated property and their lost status in government and those whose main purpose was to avenge the murder of Louis of Orléans. There were some who wanted to hang on until the English arrived. Others thought that reliance on these dangerous auxiliaries was shameful and preferred to do without their help. The Duke of Berry's chancellor, who must have known the truth, denied point-blank that there was any agreement with the English. Some of the defenders, determined to wreck the negotiations, ignored the truce and led sorties into the Burgundian camp while the negotiations were in

progress. As for the Burgundians there were many things to set them against each other. Some agreed with the Dauphin and the Duke of Bar that the war had lasted too long. Some wondered whether the capture of Bourges was still feasible. Some were fanatics who were determined to insist on unconditional surrender. Some had received grants of property confiscated from the Armagnacs which they were unwilling to surrender as part of any deal with them.

In the end the Duke of Burgundy prevailed by sheer obduracy and force of personality. On 12 July his staff sent a document into the town containing a summary of the terms that he would accept. It was a short and partisan document which gave John everything that he wanted except for the public humiliation of the Duke of Berry. Both sides bound themselves to adhere to the 'hollow peace' of Chartres. The Armagnacs were to surrender Bourges and to open all their other garrisoned fortresses to the King's officers. They were also to renounce 'any treaty or alliance that they are said to have made with the English' and any other alliance directed against the Duke of Burgundy. In return the Duke of Burgundy and his allies promised very little. They would to do their best, they said, to persuade Charles VI to restore the offices and property of which the Armagnacs had been despoiled. The defenders of Bourges were given until three o'clock on the following afternoon, 13 July, to accept. As the appointed hour approached Charles VI stood in front of the walls in full armour in the burning heat, the *Oriflamme* flying from a lance beside him and his entire army drawn up in lines across the plain at his back. Inside the city the Armagnac princes were still arguing about the terms. Finally they decided to reject them. But the Duke of Berry was as determined as John the Fearless. He sent a message to the King accepting them. It was the King's last public appearance for three months. At some time in the next few hours, as the heralds passed through the camp announcing the cease-fire, the King relapsed into his old illness after his longest and most active period of lucidity for many years. Yet even in this period of relative coherence Charles had contributed little to the decision to fight the Duke of Berry and nothing to the decision to make peace with him. His only function now was to dignify the grubby decisions of other men. That at least he had done.[53]

For the Duke of Burgundy it was a remarkable outcome considering the weakness of his position just a week earlier. On 16 July 1412 the Duke of Berry presented the keys of the city to the Dauphin. The formalities were completed in the hamlet of Argenvières on the banks of the Loire opposite La Charité, where the Duke of Burgundy had withdrawn with the King and the

Dauphin to escape the foetid air around Bourges. Here, a week later on 22 July, the Armagnac leaders who had been present at the siege swore the customary oaths to observe the terms of peace. They were joined by emissaries from Charles of Orléans and his brothers, who undertook on their behalf to be bound by them as well. They then set about burying as best they could their embarrassing treaty with the English. A letter was issued in the King's name annulling it and commanding the Armagnac princes to renounce it. The Dukes of Berry and Bourbon and Charles d'Albret then sealed letters to Henry IV and the Prince of Wales citing the King's command and declaring that they considered themselves to be released.[54]

There remained the difficult question of how to obtain formal royal sanction for these arrangements at a time when the King could not even go through the motions of approving them. A great council was summoned to Auxerre to deal with this. Every attempt was made to make it as representative as possible. All the royal princes and the leading noblemen of the realm were summoned, together with the officers of state, delegations from the Parlement and the University of Paris and representatives of all the major walled towns. The meeting had to be deferred to enable them to get there. It eventually opened in the great cloister of the Benedictine abbey of St Germain in Auxerre on 22 August. A timber platform had been erected on which the Dauphin sat enthroned, surrounded by princes and noblemen, officials, judges and doctors of the University. The mass of representatives and onlookers filled the cloister and spilled out into the open spaces outside. Charles of Orléans arrived late, accompanied by his brother the Count of Vertus. The two young men were dressed in mourning black. They were accompanied by a retinue fit for a king and an armed escort of some 2,000 soldiers, including a contingent of English men-at-arms and archers from Gascony. A clerk read out the terms of the peace, which were essentially the same as those agreed outside Bourges. The Dukes of Orléans and Burgundy agreed that the murder of Louis of Orléans would be forgiven and that the subject would never again be raised between them. They promised to renounce all their agreements or understandings with the English and never again to resort to English arms for their purposes. When they had sworn to observe the terms of peace, at the Dauphin's command every man-at-arms present cast his sword on the ground and, raising his right arm, swore the same oath. On the same day a royal ordinance was issued on the authority of the Dauphin and the royal council restoring Charles of Orléans and his siblings to all their forfeited domains. In one of those graphically insincere exhibitions of reconciliation of which contemporaries were so fond, the Dukes of Burgundy and Orléans

rode about on the next morning on the same horse as their followers muttered oaths beneath their breath. Most of the troops who had been at Bourges had already been paid off. The rest left after the assembly at Auxerre. Charles of Orléans dismissed his own soldiers a little later. The truth was that once the Duke of Berry had deserted them he and his brother had no alternative but to submit. The terms were really no more than the old, humiliating peace of Chartres, reheated and served up in the hope that three years of bitter civil strife would teach men to forget the offences of the past.[55]

*

On 10 August 1412, more than a month after the date originally planned, the Duke of Clarence landed at Saint-Vaast-la-Hougue in the north of the Cotentin peninsula. The landing place had probably been agreed in advance with the Count of Alençon and Arthur de Richemont, for a few days later the English commanders met them in the town of Fougères on the march of Brittany. Between them they had a formidable force. Clarence's army had a payroll strength of 4,000 men, making a total of 8,000 including pages and armed servants. It was the largest English army to appear in France since the Earl of Buckingham's expedition of 1380. Alençon and Richemont must have had another 2,000 with them. They were shortly joined by 600 Gascon men-at-arms, who had been paid off after serving on one side or the other in the siege of Bourges.

It was presumably at this stage that the English leaders learned about the peace between the Dukes of Berry and Burgundy. The news must have come as a shock. They could not return to England without serious loss of face. They were also due to be paid substantial sums of money once they reached Blois. As for Alençon and Richemont they had not been party to the agreement outside Bourges and neither of them was disposed to observe it. For his part the Count of Alençon was determined first to recover the places which he had lost to the Duke of Anjou and the Count of Saint-Pol in the spring. The combined army made short work of the Burgundian garrisons in the counties of Alençon and Perche, which were overrun with little if any resistance. Then, at about the end of August, reports reached the Count of Alençon of the ordinances at Auxerre. He would be dangerously exposed if he tried to carry on the civil war on his own now. So he parted company with the English. In due course he adhered to the peace of Bourges like most of his allies and renounced the treaty with Henry IV which he had been primarily responsible for making. Meanwhile the Duke of Clarence led his army through Maine and Anjou, burning and looting as he went, before moving east through the Loire valley.[56]

As Clarence's army advanced the mad King was slowly carried down the Yonne by barge from Auxerre, followed at a respectful distance by the princes on their own barges and by their mounted retinues on the riverbank. Their progress was interrupted at frequent intervals by messengers bringing reports of the devastation being visited on Lower Normandy and Maine by the English. The convoy paused at Melun to consider what to do. It was an angry meeting. Preliminary contact had been made with the Duke of Clarence. This suggested that the English considered themselves to be owed about 200,000 *écus* under the treaty made in London in May. They were unwilling to withdraw until it was paid. The real question was who was to pay them. The royal treasury had been emptied by the campaigns of the summer and was heavily in debt. The Parisians proposed that those who had invited the English in should pay them off. The Armagnac princes, finding the consensus against them, had no alternative but to agree. They nominated ambassadors to negotiate with the invaders. But to give them some bargaining power and to cover the possibility of failure the assembled notables recognised that they would have to be ready to fight. They decided to summon an army from every part of France to muster at Chartres on 8 October.[57]

6 The Duke of Clarence in France, August–December 1412

On about 16 September 1412 the Duke of Clarence arrived with his army before the walls of Blois to present his accounts. As the English approached the town the heralds of the Dukes of Berry, Orléans and Bourbon came before them bearing their masters' letters renouncing their engagements to Henry IV. Clarence had them read out in his presence and then handed back to the heralds. 'I cannot believe that letters like these really come from people of your noble blood,' he wrote back to the three dukes; 'an agreement so solemnly made by men of such high authority on both sides and then agreed, sworn and ratified, cannot simply be renounced … and I have come to Blois to perform it.' Besides, he added, if the Armagnacs had not proposed the terms they had England would have aligned itself with their enemies. These exchanges were mainly for form. The Duke of Orléans' private messages were more accommodating and accompanied by a gift of fresh fish for

Clarence's dinner table. The English army remained at Blois for a fortnight waiting for the princes' proposals. While they waited, raiding parties were detached from the army. They maintained the pressure on the princes by devastating large parts of the Orléanais.[58]

The Dukes of Berry, Orléans and Bourbon conducted the negotiations from the fortress of Vincennes outside Paris, where the court had settled at the end of September. Their first proposals were brought to Blois by Charles of Orléans' principal military adviser, Raoul de Gaucourt, at about the beginning of October 1412. They were presumably unacceptable, for the English shortly crossed the Loire and penetrated into Berry. In the third week of October they were at Selles on the River Cher when Gaucourt returned with fresh proposals, this time accompanied by other councillors of the Duke of Orléans. The two most contentious issues were the amount of the indemnity to be paid to the English and the route by which they would leave France. The indemnity was a sensitive matter because the Dukes of Berry and Orléans, the two principal paymasters of the Armagnac cause, had both been ruined by war damage, the spoliation of their assets by the Burgundians and the cost of the summer campaigns. Clarence's route home was important to Jean de Berry for he was desperate to keep the English out of Poitou, the richest and the most politically sensitive part of his appanage. By the end of October agreement in principle had been reached on both points but the first instalment of the indemnity, which had to be paid up front, had not yet been found. Until it was the English refused to seal the agreement. Clarence advanced menacingly south towards the march of Poitou with Gaucourt and his colleagues following on their heels. Early in November they halted at the small town of Buzançais on the River Indre. From here they began to send out raiding parties westward towards the valley of the Creuse. Meanwhile from the Bordelais the English mounted a supporting operation against Poitou from the west. They encountered virtually no local opposition. According to a report reaching Paris people flocked into English-held areas to swear oaths of fealty to Henry IV. There was a swagger in the English step these days. They behaved, wrote a French chronicler, as if they were at home surrounded by their compatriots. Jacques d'Heilly, the French military commander in the region, returned in alarm to Paris to warn the council of the danger. Unless an army was sent urgently to the Gascon march the English would be impossible to dislodge without prolonged and costly operations.[59]

The treaty was finally sealed at Buzançais on 14 November 1412. It was not a treaty between France and England but a private

bargain between the Duke of Clarence and the representatives of the three Armagnac dukes. They promised to pay the invaders an indemnity of 150,000 gold *écus*. The first two-thirds of this sum were due on 30 November and the last third at Christmas. To secure these payments Charles of Orléans surrendered seven prominent Armagnacs as hostages including his twelve-year-old brother, John Count of Angoulême. In return the English undertook to abandon all the places still occupied by them and to withdraw from the domains of the King of France by the end of the year without doing any damage on their way. In addition the Estates of Poitou paid a modest indemnity of their own in return for the Duke of Clarence undertaking not to pass though their province. Finally the treaty paid lip-service to Henry IV's long-standing desire for a permanent peace with France. It was agreed that a fresh peace conference would open on the march of Picardy before the end of the year to resolve the wider issues between the two countries. This should have been the end of the campaign. In fact it was not. Shortly after the deal had been made Clarence decided that he had not exacted enough. He demanded another 60,000 *écus* and wasted the countryside around him until the three dukes finally agreed to pay it. The additional payment was separately secured by a pledge of the last and most spectacular objects to survive in the treasury of the Sainte-Chapelle of Bourges after the depredations of the summer, including a large and exquisite gold cross containing relics of the Passion. The lion's share of the money, 120,000 *écus*, was allocated to Clarence personally. Satisfied, Clarence left Buzançais for Gascony. The French were surprised by the English army's strict discipline and the almost complete lack of looting or destruction on their retreat.[60]

The Duke of Clarence arrived in Bordeaux on 11 December 1412.[61] His was the first English army to set foot in the city since the defeated and bedraggled legions of John of Gaunt in 1374. They had good reason to feel pleased with themselves. The indemnities promised at Buzançais, if they had been paid in full, would have earned them the equivalent of £36,000, roughly the yield of a Parliamentary subsidy. In fact they were never entirely paid. The French royal council undertook to bear half the cost and allowed Charles of Orléans to impose 40,000 *livres* in additional taxes in his appanage to help meet the rest. But the land would not bear the extra taxation after the devastations of the summer and the French government was bankrupt. As a result the three dukes were unable to produce more than a modest part of the money which fell due in November and December 1412. So when Clarence eventually returned to England in the following spring he took the young

Count of Angoulême with him. The other hostages were lodged in the fortress of Fronsac. Small payments continued to be made at intervals over the years, mostly by the Duke of Orléans. Just over half of it had been paid by 1421 when Clarence was killed. The total receipts from the treaty of Buzançais, although they fell short of the princes' promises, substantially exceeded the cost of the expedition. However, it all went into the pockets of Clarence and his captains rather than to the Exchequer which had borne the mobilisation costs. Clarence's descendants continued to press for the unpaid balance for a century to come. Most of the treasures of the Sainte-Chapelle of Bourges were never recovered, and the Count of Angoulême was destined to remain a prisoner in England for the next thirty-two years.[62]

Politically Henry IV's alliance with the Armagnacs had not achieved the golden results for which he had hoped back in May. But it was not altogether devoid of consequences. The brief campaign had exposed the weakness of France. The Duke of Clarence's army had encountered no resistance from the frightened and demoralised inhabitants of the provinces that they had passed through. It was obvious that the peace of Auxerre was no more likely to be permanent than the 'hollow' peace of Chartres of which it was in effect a restatement. The treaty of Buzançais contained nothing to rule out future cooperation between the English government and the Armagnac princes. On the contrary, on the day it was sealed the Duke of Clarence entered into a personal alliance with Charles of Orléans to 'serve, aid, counsel and support his interest and honour with all my power in every way I can'.[63]

On the march of Gascony the pivotal figure was Bernard of Armagnac, the only member of the league of Gien who never adhered to the peace of Auxerre. The French royal council offered to restore him to his confiscated domains. His father-in-law Jean de Berry sent one of his chamberlains to press him to submit. But Armagnac was a natural extremist. He also had more at stake personally than the other princes of his party. The dominant factor in his calculations was his family's ancient vendetta with the Counts of Foix. When Jean de Grailly had succeeded his father as Count of Foix at the beginning of 1412 one of his first acts had been to accept appointment by Charles VI's Burgundian ministers as captain-general in Languedoc, with instructions to expel his rival from all of his domains south of the Dordogne. The new Count made common cause with the three Burgundian commissioners responsible for the government of Languedoc. As a result the Count of Armagnac had been under heavy pressure throughout 1412. In April the commissioners invaded Armagnac's county of Rouergue

with an army raised in the Midi, reinforced by mercenary companies brought in from the Dauphiné and Savoy. Shortly after this, in June and July, the Count of Foix overran much of the Armagnac domains in the Albigeois. Over the winter months they combined forces to expel Armagnac from Comminges. By the time that Clarence entered Bordeaux Bernard of Armagnac was engaged in a bitter war of survival extending over a broad front across Languedoc from Gascony to Gévaudan. Politically the peace of Auxerre had left him stranded. His political authority in Languedoc and his ability to defend himself against his enemies had always depended on his status as the delegate of the Duke of Berry. As he wrote to Charles VI, he fought his wars in Languedoc 'not as a mere brigand but only as the servant of [my lord of Berry] and my lord of Orléans'. Berry's submission to the King had effectively put an end to that.[64]

In this extremity the Count of Armagnac turned once more to the English. He found a useful ally in Charles d'Albret. Unlike Armagnac, Albret had been present in the cloister of Saint-Germain of Auxerre when the peace had been pronounced. But he had quickly fallen out with the King's Burgundian councillors when it became clear that they had no intention of restoring him to his office of Constable of France. Neither man had lifted a finger to stop the English offensive on the Gascon march in November. In February 1413 they both came to Bordeaux accompanied by a crowd of supporters and advisers, including Jean de Loupiac who had represented Bernard of Armagnac in the negotiations in London the previous May. On the 13th they sealed an agreement with the Duke of Clarence which amounted to a reaffirmation of the Anglo-Armagnac treaty, at least as far as their domains were concerned. The two men promised to do homage to the King of England as Duke of Aquitaine for all their lands in south-western France on condition that Henry IV would do homage for the duchy as a whole to the King of France and rein in the distant operations of the Gascon *routiers*. Clarence undertook on Henry IV's behalf that he would not support any operations of the Duke of Burgundy against Jean de Berry, Charles of Orléans or other 'lords of their alliance'. He even promised that Henry would fund a company of 500 men-at-arms in Armagnac's service and another of 200 in Albret's in the event that they were attacked. If they were threatened with a full-scale war the English King was to send a lieutenant of his own blood to Bordeaux to support them with an army comparable to Clarence's, 1,000 men-at-arms and 3,000 archers. If Clarence knew his father's mind the terms which he agreed with Armagnac and Albret in January 1413 throw a good deal of light on the English

King's long-term objectives. They suggest that Henry was willing, just as Richard II had been in the 1390s, to jettison a century of English claims to hold the duchy in full sovereignty provided that the French restored it to its wider boundaries. In the short term, however, the main significance of the agreement was that it committed the English government to support the Armagnac cause in southern France indefinitely.[65]

Whether England was willing or able to support such a burden was a question that was never answered. The agreement was subject to ratification by the English King and by the time the instrument reached Westminster he was dead. Henry IV had been unable to transact business since Christmas 1412 and was only intermittently conscious over the following weeks. He died on 20 March 1413 in the Jerusalem Chamber of the Palace of Westminster. A generation later the French chronicler Enguerrand de Monstrelet told the story that in the last days of his life the Prince of Wales, thinking his father already dead, had taken the crown from his room. Waking up a few moments later the King demanded to know where it had gone. The story was probably apocryphal, but from Monstrelet it passed to the Tudor chronicler Holinshed and from him to Shakespeare. 'Dost thou so hunger for mine empty chair that thou wilt needs invest thee with my honours before thy hour be ripe?' the old King is supposed to have asked his son; 'God knows, my son, by what bypaths and indirect crook'd ways I met this crown, and I myself know well how troublesome it sat upon my head.'[66]

Notes

1
Pisan, 'Lamentacion', 181, 182, 184.

2
Hoccleve, *Regement*, 191 (ll. 5307–10). Council: Waurin, *Rec. cron.*, ii, 115–16.

3
Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 160, 326, 354–6; *Foed.*, viii, 497; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 35–6, 95; *Ord.*, ix, 530–1. 1411: AD Côte d'Or B11942/21; BL Add. Chart. 3409 (Welsh).

4
Wales: *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 420 [6], 423 [17], 459–60 [20], 491 [52]; *Proc. PC*, ii, 14–18. Douglas: *Cal. Doc. Scot.*, iv, nos 737, 762; *Foed.*, viii, 478, 519, 520; *Proc. PC*, i, 323–4; *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 193; M. Brown (1998), 108–10. Dunbar: Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 72–4; *Reg. G. S. Scot.*, i, no. 920. Border law: Neville (1998), 96–108. Incidents: Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 72, 75, 81; *Reg. Glasguensis*, ii, 316; *Proc. PC*, i, 323–7; *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 193; Hardyng, *Chron.*, 207. Auld alliance: *Acts Parl. Scot.*, xii, 20–2 (1407); *Exch. R. Scot.*, iv, 70 (1408), 132, 133 (1410), 163 (1412), 189 (1413); AD Nord B542/150682 (1411); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, i, 259. Expenditure: *Proc. PC*, ii, 14–17.

5
Health: McNiven (1985), 761–4. Prince: Livius, *Vita*, 4–5; *First Engl. Life*, 11. New government: *Parl. Rolls*., viii, 539 [26]; McFarlane (1972), 105–8; Harriss (1988), 49–50.

6
Clifford: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 202. On him: *CPR 1405–8*, 10; PRO C61/108, m. 9 (Courbefy); *Reg. Jurade*, i, 48 (Libourne); *CCR 1405–9*, 442. Mission to England: BN PO 212/Bataille/28–31; *Foed.*, viii, 684; 'Geste des ducs', 393–4; 'Livre des trahisons', 72–3. On Bataille: *Coll. Bastard d'Estang*, nos 416, 530, 550, 689. On Loupiac: *Foed.*, viii, 512, 716–17; PRO C76/93, m. 17. On Du Juch: *Lettres de Jean V*, ii, no. 1125; BN PO 1597/de Juch/6. Kernezn: 'Livres des trahisons', 76–7. On Kernezn (or 'Carman', 'Kernehem' or 'Kermen'): *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, no. 409; *Foed.*, viii, 667; 'Geste des ducs', 394–5.

7
Great council: 'Geste des ducs', 394–9; 'Livre des trahisons', 75–7. Partial corroboration in AD Côte d'Or B1562, fols 33vo–34, B1571, fols 71vo–72. Diplomatic contact: AD Côte d'Or B1570, fol. 274 (squire); *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 474; *Cotton MS Galba*, 326. Troops: PRO E28/30 (26 May 1414); AD Côte d'Or B1570, fols 173vo, 274vo, 287, 291, 292, 296; BN Fr. 20528, p. 194; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 172.

8
CCR 1409–13, 166, 240–1; Wylie (1884–98), 301; PRO E403/608, m. 12 (28 Aug.). Embassy: *Foed.*, viii, 698–9; *Cotton MS Galba*, 322–6. On Chichele: Jacob (1967), 13–14. On Arundel: *ODNB*, xix, 772–3. On Mortimer: *HoC.*, iii, 784–5. On Catterick: *ODNB*, x, 562.

9
Cancellation: *Foed.*, viii, 700 (3 Sept.) is the last reference in the English records. Arundel, Warwick: *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 598–600; Gregory, 'Chron.', 106. Prince's role: PRO C76/95, m. 22 (Arundel going abroad 'in the Prince's service'); AD Côte d'Or B1570, fol. 173vo, 291 ('the Prince's archers'). On Warwick: *Beauchamp Pageant*, 27–30, 68–96.

10
BN Clair. 6/82, 39/131. Umfraville: BN Fr. n.a. 20528, p. 198 (paid separately from Arundel's company); *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 600 (as 'Earl of Kyme', after his lordship in Lincolnshire); Hardyng, *Chron.*, 367–8. Trumpington: BN Fr. n.a. 20528, p. 198; *CPR 1405–8*, 123.

11
BN Fr. 20528, p. 192; AD Nord 1894, fols 48 (Scots), 235, 236 (men-at-arms). Cf. Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 227 (excludes Brabanters); 'Chron. Cordeliers', 211 (wagons); *Handelingen (1405–19)*, nos 387–92; Dixmude, *Merkw. geb.*, 59–60; Lichtervelde, 172–3. Tonnerre: Petit, 265–79; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 474. Advance: *Itin. Jean*, 382.

12
Itin. Jean, 382–3; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 466–72; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 174–9, 180, 182; 'Livre des trahisons', 96; Fenin, *Mem.*, 19; Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 31–3. *Griette*: *Garnier, 72. Ph. of Nevers: 'Chron. Cordeliers', 211. His strength: AD Côte d'Or B1563 (22 Aug.); BN Fr. n.a. 20528, pp. 198–200 (3 Oct.).

13
'Geste des nobles', 135–6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 173–87; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 484–8; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 211–12; Fénin, *Mem.*, 19–20; *Inv. Arch. Ville Bruges*, iv, 115–16; *Inv. Arch. Etat Bruges*, i, no. 284; *Inv. Arch.*

Gand, nos 505–9.

14

Itin. Jean, 383; Laborde, *Preuves*, i, no. 208; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 189; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 474–6, 522; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 231; 'Livre des trahisons', 71–2. Rates: BN Fr. n.a. 20528, p. 198.

15

Journ. B. Paris, 11–12; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 474–6, 488, 492; 'Livre des trahisons', 107–10; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 181, 188; *Sauval, iii, 266. Military summons: *Ord.*, ix, 640–2. Bournonville: *Schnerb (1997), 96–8. Numbers: BN Fr. n.a. 20528, pp. 183–7, 200–2. St-Denis: 'Geste des nobles', 137; BN Fr. n.a. 20528, p. 201. Smaller garrisons: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 181; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 480, 550–2. River crossings: BN Fr. n.a. 20528, pp. 185–7; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 478–80, 550–2; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 169. Heralds: *Choix de pièces*, i, 344–6; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 492–4; 'Geste des nobles', 137.

16

Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 498, 528–32, 556; 'Livre des trahisons', 119; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 192, 200–2. Sale of jewels: BL Add. Chart. 3125.

17

Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 490–2, 494–512, 516–20, 530–2; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 192–3.

18

Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 448, 492, 512–14, 520–2, v, 140; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 229–31; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 168–9, 192, 195–7; 'Geste des nobles', 138; *Journ. B. Paris*, 14; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 25–6. Measures against Armagnacs: *Ord.*, ix, 635–7; *Inv. AC Toulouse*, 485 (AA37/28). Louvre guard: BN Fr. 20528, pp. 183–4. Fear of revolution: BN Coll. Bourgogne 54, 342–342vo.

19

Itin. Jean, 383–4; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 524–6; 'Livre des trahisons', 117–18; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 198–200; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 232. Numbers: BN Fr. n.a. 20528, pp. 192–8; BN Clair. 39/131.

20

Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 232, 237; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 200–2, 211; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 526–8. Butchers: AN JJ165, fol. 249vo (letters of remission, Nov. 1411, for the murder of an English soldier by a butcher's journeyman).

21

'Livre des trahisons', 117; *Itin. Jean*, 384; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 556–63; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 203–7; *Journ. B. Paris*, 15–16; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 212–13; Lefèvre, *Chron.*, i, 38–9; Fenin, *Mem.*, 22–3; 'Chron. Brioc.', 90.

22

Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 563–6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 207–8; *Journ. B. Paris*, 16; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 213; Lefèvre, *Chron.*, i, 39–40; Fenin, *Mem.*, 23; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 300–1; Cagny, *Chron.*, 66–7; 'Geste des nobles', 139.

23

English prisoners: AD Nord 1894, fol. 141; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 602. Arnauton: BL Add. Chart. 240, 3418. Retribution: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 532–50, 566–70, 592–4; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 233–4, 238; *Journ. B. Paris*, 17; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 209, 210–11, 224–5; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 84–5, 301.

24

Council: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 211. Finance: *Inv. Arch. Bruges*, iv, 57 (subsidy); Vaughan (1966), 116–17; Schnerb (2007 [1]), 266–8. Jewels pawned: *Pannier, xxvi, 314–18. Devaluation: *Ord.*, ix, 645–7; BN Fr. n.s. 20528, p. 180. *Taille*: BN Fr. 21427, fol. 45; Fr. 25709/608, 609, 669

(giving its value); Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 31–2. Troops: BN Fr. n.a. 20528, pp. 191, 202–4, 243. Arundel: *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, nos 596–7, 625; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 33–4, 301; BN Clair. 39/131 (wages); BL Add. Chart. 52 (jewels); AD Nord 1894, fol. 141 (compensation).

25
Vaissète, ix, 1011; *Lehoux (1966–8), iii, 251, 509.

26
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 211, 212–13; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 568–78; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 234–5. English: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 220, 222–4 (where Umfraville is called 'Earl of Kent'); Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 44; 'Geste des nobles', 139–40; AD Côte d'Or 1570, fols 290–290vo, 292; BN Clair. 55/75; BN Fr. n.a. 25028, p. 191; *Itin. Jean*, 385 (23 Dec.). Prisoners: Hardyng, *Chron.*, 368.

27
AN JJ166/28 (orders); *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 582–6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 213–16; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 40–1; BN Fr. 20528, pp. 210–13. Surrender terms: AN JJ166/28. Robert d'Esne: Gonzalez, App. 204–6.

28
BN Fr. n.a. 20528, pp. 190–1; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 217–19, 221; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 584–8, 602–4; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 236–7. Clermont: Leguai (1962), 60–1.

29
Demurger, 166–8; 'Information'.

30
BN Coll. Doat 9, fols 106–9 (commissioners); BN Coll. Doat 212, fol. 46–49vo (Armagnac); *Vaissète, ix, 1013, x, 1950–3, 1956–7, 1958–9; Bernis, 'Chron.', para. 139; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 570; BN Fr. n.a. 7624, fols 59–62vo.

31
BN Fr. 25709/669.

32
Bourbonnais: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 226–7; La Mure, ii, 126n; Leguai (1962), 62–3. Alençon: BN Fr. 25709/669; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 602–4, 622; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 239. Orléanist Normandy: BN Fr. n.a. 7624, fols 149–51.

33
BN Fr. 25709/669; *Rec. doc. Poitou*, xxvi, 229–31; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 610–14; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 239; 'Geste des nobles', 141; Lannoy, *Oeuvres*, 18; BL Add. Chart. 3452 (money); Favreau (1978), 207–8. Reinforcements: BN Fr. n.a. 23634/183, 190, 192, 205, 208, 221, 227, 231, 237, etc. (march of Gascony); BN Fr. n.a. 20528, pp. 243, 249 (English).

34
Charles VI: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 594–600; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 45–6. Bedridden: *Extr. Reg. Tournai*, 88–9. *Taille*: BN Fr. 25709/669; BN Fr. n.a. 20528, pp. 179–80, 217. Expenditure: Pocquet (1940–1), 115–17; Jouvenel, Hist., 239.

35
Inv. AC Dijon, i, 27 (B148, fol. 162vo); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 221 (Roucy).

36
Cat. Arch. Joursanvault, nos 97, 99; BN Fr. 6538/37, 20028/99, 100 (plate); BN PO 2157/Orléans/478 (taxation).

37
Illness: *CPR 1408–13,* 346. Abdication proposals: *Giles's Chron.*, 63 (late,

but probably based on earlier accounts), and cf. *Parl. Rolls,* x, 290 [12]; *Eulogium*, iii, 420–1 (under 1413). Dismissals: *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 517 [9], 519 [11], 539 [25]; *Foed.*, viii, 710, 753; *HoC.*, iv, 42; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 612. Thomas: See Hardyng, *Chron.*, 369 (late, but generally reliable). On him: McNiven (1980 [2]), 6–7.

38

Rec. Convoc., iv, 380, 386–7, xiii, 328–9; *Proc. PC*, ii, 17–18; *Parl. Rolls*, viii, 518 [10]; PRO E179/242/73 (£1,400).

39

John's bid: AD Côte d'Or B1570, fols 108, 117–117vo; *Foed.*, viii, 712–13, 721. Armagnac mission: Cagny, *Chron.*, 17; *Foed.*, viii, 712–13, 715–17, 718–19, 727; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 238–42. Legrand's views: Beltran, 198–207; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 241–2. Role of Alençon: Cagny, *Chron.*, 71.

40

Foed., viii, 721, 728–9; AD Côte d'Or B1570, fols 163, 262 (Joan); *Pocquet (1960), 335, 337–8; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 611. Kernezn: PRO E403/611, m. 7 (23 Nov.). Coldharbour: PRO 101/406/1; *Foed.*, viii, 628; Myers (1972), 27–8.

41

Embassy: BN Fr. 25709/669; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 236–7; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 49–50; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 626–8; *Anglo-Norman L.*, no. 371; PRO E101/44/18, E101/406/1, E364/45, m. 1 (Grey); PRO 101/406/1; PRO E403/611, m. 7 (23 Nov.). Burgundian plans: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 234–5, 237–47, 258–9; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 628–32; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 240.

42

Foed., viii, 738–43; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 608. Meeting point: *Cal. Letter Books* I, 102; PRO E404/27/394; PRO E28/23 (16 May 1412). Execution: *CCR 1409–13*, 282; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 257. Apology: *Pocquet (1960), 335–6.

43

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 248–55; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 634, 672–4; Cagny, *Chron.*, 77–8, 79–80; *Journ. B. Paris*, 18–19; *Cat. Arch. Joursanvault*, no. 103; 'Chron. Britann.', 116; Gruel, *Chron.*, 8–10; *Coll. Bastard d'Estang*, 153 (no. 1532). Families: Cosneau, 23; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 253 (for Jeannet, see Gonzalez, App. 240).

44

Monstrelet, *Chron.* ii, 282–3; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 636; *Itin. Jean*, 388. Numbers: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 240 (add reinforcements received in Berry: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 648). English: AD Côte d'Or 1571, fols 82–82vo, 99–100vo, B1578, fol. 14; BN Fr. n.a. 20528, pp. 243, 249; BN Clair. 46, pp. 3405–3405vo, 49/3715, 53/3988, 62/4823, 85/6709, 98/7639, 102/37. Cf. Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 276–7; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 688; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 616. Scots: BN Clair. 100/30.

45

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 258; *Journ. B. Paris*, 20–4; 'Journ. Parisien', 163–72; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 67, 68, 73, 75; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 658–60, 680–2; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 242. Fears of Univ.: Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 84–5 (excommunications); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 241–2 (tract).

46

Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 640–4, 648, 650–6, 662–4; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 269–71; *Itin. Jean*, 389.

47

Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 666, 678–80, 686–8, 696; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 271,

291–2; Fenin, *Mem.*, 27. Jewels: Lehoux (1966–8), iii, 270; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 244. Topography: see Fleury plan (late sixteenth cent.): BN GED–4281 (RES).

48

Fenin, *Mem.*, 27; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 646, 662–4, 670–2, 678, 680, 682; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 241–2; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 277–81; *Journ. B. Paris*, 25.

49

Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 666–70; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 274–7; *Journ. B. Paris*, 24–5; 'Journ. Parisien', 170–1.

50

Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 678–80, 688–90; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 244; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 280–3, 286.

51

Plans: *Foed.*, viii, 733; *Cal. Letter Books* I, 102; *Proc. PC*, ii, 33–4, 120–1; *Cotton MS Galba*, 266–7. Contacts with John: BN Coll. Moreau 1424/55; AD Côte d'Or B1571, fols 111vo, 175vo–176. Changes, protests: *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 610, 614; PRO E404/27/394; *Foed.*, viii, 745–50, 757, 758–60. The dispute with the Prince has to be reconstructed from his and the Earl of Arundel's letters (both 31 May) to the D. of Burgundy at *Pocquet (1960), 335–8; Kernezn's letter to Charles VI (probably mid-June) summarised at *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 658; and the Prince's disingenuous open letter of 17 June at *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 612–14. Money: *Proc. PC*, ii, 33–4, 120–2; *Foed.*, viii, 747–9. Calais: *Proc. PC*, ii, 34–5.

52

Cotton MS Galba, 266–7; BN Coll. Moreau 1424/55 (John's reply d. 14 June); AD Côte d'Or B1571, fol. 17vo (Prince's letter received); *Chron. R. St-Denis*, 658 (Kernezn).

53

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 279–80, 282–9; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 682–700, 708; 'Geste des nobles', 142.

54

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 288–90; *Roy. Lett.*, ii, 322–5.

55

Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 79–80; 'Lettres closes', *Plancher, iii, no. 287; *Ord.*, x, 18–21; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 708–18; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 292–5. English troops: BL Add. Chart. 66. Renunciations: *Choix de pièces*, i, 352–3; *Roy. Lett.*, ii, 325; *Cotton MS Galba*, 329–31.

56

Chron. Mont-St-M., i, 19; Cochon, *Chron.*, 263; *Livre Comptes Marest*, 49; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 291–2; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 704–6; Cagny, *Chron.*, 76–7; *Inv. AC Orléans*, 90 (CC543). Numbers: *Foed.*, viii, 746; Gruel, *Chron.*, 9. Alençon's submission: AN K57/27.

57

Itin. Jean, 392; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 720; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 299–300; BL Add. Chart. 3417.

58

Roy. Lett., ii, 328–32; *Inv. AC Orléans*, 90–1 (CC543); *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 720. Fish: BL Add. Chart. 55.

59

Negotiations: BL Add. Chart. 237–9; BN PO 759/Chomery/23, 26; AN K59/2; BL Add. Chart. 3422–4, 3434; *Lacour (1934 [1]), 30, 75, 76–7, 82. Poitou: *Lacour (1934 [1]), 75–6; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 732–4; 'Remontrances Univ.', 432.

60
AN K57/28, K59/3, 4; A J919/25, fols 5vo, 25vo; Add. Chart. 1399, 1400. Artefacts: *Lacour (1934 [1]), 30; Hiver, 51–3; *Cat. Arch. Joursanvault*, no. 3379. Poitou indemnity: *Lacour (1934 [1]), 66. Horses: BL Add. Chart. 3425, 3455. Retreat: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 720.

61
Vale (1970), 62.

62
'Geste des nobles', 144; BL Add. Chart. 57, 70–1, 1403–4, 3437, 3440–1, 3458; *Arch. Hist. Gironde*, ii, 361–2; Hiver, 53–4.

63
Choix de pièces, i, 359.

64
*Vaissète, ix, 1013–14, 1016–18, *x, 1958–60; Rouquette, 410–11; AD Pyr.-Atl. E424/127 (Foix–Burgundy alliance, 7 Apr. 1411); Bernis, 'Chron.', paras. 140–2; Flourac, 51–3, 54, *233–7; BN Coll. Doat 212, fols, 79–85 (Comminges).

65
AD Pyr.-Atl. E59/14. Constableship: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 292; 'Journ. Parisien', 175–6.

66
St Albans Chron., ii, 618; McNiven (1985), 764–5; *Henry IV*, Part 2, IV.v, ll. 94–6, 183–6, based on Monstrelet, Chron., ii, 338.

CHAPTER VIII

The Cabochians: Revolution in Paris, 1413

On 28 September 1412 the corpse of Jean de Montaigu was taken down from the gibbet of Montfaucon and reunited with its head, brought from the market of Les Halles where it had been displayed on a pike for the past three years. The dead minister's remains were buried by his family in the Celestine convent at Marcoussis, which he had built in his days of prosperity and power. It was a gesture of reconciliation ordered by the Dauphin Louis which John the Fearless neither approved nor reciprocated. It was also, like his conduct at Bourges, an assertion of independence by a young man in the process of throwing off his leading reins.

Louis Duke of Guyenne has had a poor historical reputation, mainly because the most eloquent French chroniclers of the day were partisans of the Duke of Burgundy and the most objective of them, Michel Pintoin of Saint-Denis, was also a sententious moralist who disapproved of the prince's private life. The Dauphin was certainly not an edifying model in the manner of his grandfather Charles V. Now approaching his sixteenth birthday, he was a broad-shouldered, good-looking young man, but sickly, portly and unfit, moody and occasionally depressive. Louis had little taste for arms or the public rituals of the French monarchy. For much of his life he had risen at midday, dined in the late afternoon, supped at midnight and gone to bed at dawn. He enjoyed banquets and parties, a trait inherited from his father, but otherwise passed most of his waking hours in his private apartments talking with intimates, playing the harp, collecting jewellery and precious objects and listening to choral music in his private chapel. To outsiders he could be graceless and rude. But much of this catalogue of vices, or what passed for such in the fifteenth century, reflected his youth and his delicate health as well as the extraordinary life that he had lived since succeeding his brother as heir to the throne in 1401. Louis had been manipulated by court politicians for as long as he could remember. The child of a mad father and a distant mother, his ambitious relatives invested him with vast nominal powers in the hope of exercising them themselves. Yet Louis was not the frivolous nonentity that historical tradition has made of him. He was cultured and intelligent. He was fluent in Latin and showed flashes of

eloquence in French. He was a shrewd observer of affairs. According to the bilious Burgundian canon of Notre-Dame who is one of our main sources for the internal history of Paris in these years, he was 'more wilful than wise'. Perhaps. But by the autumn of 1412 he had developed a strong sense of his own dignity and was growing increasingly resentful of his overbearing father-in-law.[1]

The Dauphin entered Paris by the Porte Saint-Antoine on 29 September accompanied by the Count of Vertus and the Dukes of Burgundy and Bourbon and followed by a long cavalcade of noblemen. The citizens welcomed them with bonfires and street parties as if they had triumphed in a great war. But the insincerity and fragility of the peace must have been obvious even to the revellers. The only prominent Armagnac leader who was willing to forget was the Duke of Berry. He crept back into his mansion at the Hôtel de Nesle later in the year and sealed a personal alliance with John the Fearless in which he promised to treat him 'like his own son'. The others returned to the capital full of anger and hatred after a year in which they had been hounded from the city and their abandoned mansions had been invaded by the mob. 'Peace, peace!' Hector Bastard of Bourbon, cried to one of the butchers' leaders, 'There will be another time for us to come and get you.' Within a few days the butchers were arming, the street committees were stretching their chains across the entrances to the alleyways and the watch committees were organising armed patrols at night. When, on 23 October 1412, the King was well enough to be moved from Vincennes to the Hôtel Saint-Pol he was received in the Rue Saint-Antoine with explosions of joy. But behind the facade the mood of the city was poisonous.[2]

The basis of the peace of Auxerre had been that the parties would share power in Paris, and the Armagnac princes and their clients would be duly readmitted to the royal council. But all the old partisans of Burgundy were still there. The result was that the council disintegrated into a disputatious rabble, incapable of decision. The main bone of contention was the restitution of the losses suffered by the Armagnac princes and their followers in the Burgundian proscriptions of 1411. This had been promised by the peace of Auxerre. The council at Melun had issued an ordinance in the King's name giving effect to it. But the Duke of Burgundy fought a tenacious rearguard action to obstruct its implementation. The forfeited offices had been filled by his protégés. Most of the forfeited properties had been acquired by his allies. He needed to retain their loyalty. It was a battle that he could not afford to lose. So the ordinance of Melun was swiftly followed by another, allowing existing office-holders to contest their extrusion before the

courts and to remain in possession meanwhile. The judges of the Parlement, unable to decide which side they feared most, evaded the issue so far as they could. They found various technical reasons not to register the second ordinance, and adjourned the claims of the old Armagnac office-holders until the smoke had cleared. Finally, at a council meeting in the middle of November 1412 from which the Armagnac princes appear to have been absent, John the Fearless pushed through an ordinance confirming all the existing (Burgundian) nominees in their places and the holders of confiscated property in their gains. The Duke of Berry did not recover the government of Languedoc. Charles d'Albret was not restored to the Constable's office. The lord of Hangest did not recover his old appointment as Master of the Royal Archers. The Duke of Orléans was unable to dislodge the commissioner occupying his county of Soissons or recover possession of his father's castle of Pierrefonds. His magnificent castle at Coucy remained in the possession of the Count of Saint-Pol, who stripped it of everything of value and sold the lead pipes and conduits in the markets of Paris. None of the dispossessed Armagnac *baillis* and seneschals was reinstated, and few of the former officers of the *grands corps* in Paris. These decisions occasioned much bitterness, and more or less guaranteed the failure of the peace.[3]

John the Fearless was content to see his old adversaries' path to influence and wealth blocked, but he could not afford to allow the deadlock at the heart of government to continue. The Bourges campaign had been the most expensive military enterprise of the French government since the 1380s. It had cost the Crown more than 650,000 *livres* in cash, and left it heavily in debt to soldiers, moneylenders and tax farmers. The resources of John's own domains fell far short of what he needed to maintain his political and military following, and the assignments made to him from Crown revenues proved impossible to satisfy. In the autumn of 1412, he was drastically pruning the pensions and grants that he had lavished on his servants and retainers in better times. Meanwhile, the Duke of Clarence was at Bordeaux with the largest English army to set foot in France for thirty years, and was sealing alliances with some of John the Fearless's most persistent enemies. At about the beginning of December 1412, John took a bold gamble. He persuaded the council to summon the Estates-General to Paris. 'Above all things, be careful never to allow great assemblies of nobles and commons in your realm,' Charles VI's secretary Pierre Salmon had once written to the King. It was conventional wisdom. The ostensible reason for departing from it now was the financial crisis of the monarchy. But John the Fearless had a wider agenda.

He hoped to outflank his Armagnac rivals by bidding for power with a programme of radical reforms. Like previous assemblies of the kind, the Estates-General was likely to be taken over by the radicals of Paris and the industrial cities of the north, a constituency where he had always enjoyed support. Like Charles the Bad sixty years before, he was confident that his personal charisma would enable him to ride the tiger of public opinion.[4]

The Estates-General opened in the great hall of the Hôtel Saint-Pol on 30 January 1413. The King presided from his throne at the far end of the hall, flanked by the Dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy. The assembly was dominated from the start by the representatives of the city and the University of Paris, who were present in great numbers. Judging by the fragmentary surviving record, the rest of France was poorly represented. The northern towns sent delegations. The clergy was represented by the five northern provinces of Sens, Reims, Rouen, Bourges and Lyon. There is no trace of any representation from the south. The Armagnac princes stayed away, sending their councillors instead. They feared for their lives in the fevered atmosphere of the capital. The opening address, which was delivered by the Dauphin's Chancellor Jean de Nielles, must have been received with incredulity. With the peace of Auxerre, he told them, the troubles of the last five years were behind them. He would not hesitate, he declared, to offer his own opinion that it would last 'for ever'. The main threat to France's security now was external. It came from England. The army of the Duke of Clarence was at Bordeaux. Only a great army and vast financial resources would enable him to be defeated. The King, he said, needed three things in his extremity: 'reassurance, support, and money'. The spokesman announced that instead of holding separate meetings of each Estate in the traditional way, they were to confer by ecclesiastical provinces, the city and university of Paris being treated as a separate province of its own. He gave them six days to come back with their proposals.[5]

Over the following days, the various groups within the Estates prepared their *doléances*, the traditional statements of grievances which they expected to see addressed as a condition of granting any financial support. The first to be presented were those of the provinces of Reims, Rouen and Lyon. Some of their *doléances* were the staple of such documents, familiar from the assemblies of the previous centuries: the excessive number and cost of the King's officers, their corruption, incompetence and misconduct, the bias or indifference of the judges who were supposed to restrain them. But two complaints were louder and more persistent than any. The first was the burden of taxation over the past eleven years since Louis of

Orléans' first *taille* of 1402. It was not just the number and amount of the *tailles*. It was the wasteful methods by which they were collected, the uneven incidence of a tax which fell mainly on the shoulders of the poor and middling people, the appropriation of the proceeds by collectors, officials and appanaged princes, and the diversion of much of what reached the King's coffers to uses other than the war for which they were ostensibly imposed. The second complaint was the want of adequate defences against the English. Their renewed aggressiveness had provoked alarm across much of provincial France. The men of the province of Reims said that their province consisted of great open plains, wide open to English armies landing at Calais but almost entirely undefended. The province of Rouen pointed to the long, indented coastline of Normandy and their ruined maritime trade, and complained that the government had done nothing to protect it from English piracy. But none of them had any constructive proposals for reconciling the widespread opposition to more taxes with the demands for better defence against the English, apart from the usual programme of economies in the civil service and one suggestion for a special tax on rich officials. Running through the *doléances* was a dangerous subcurrent of provincial particularism of a kind which had surfaced so often in past crises of the French state. The province of Reims wanted its taxes reserved for its own defence, a system which had proved to be disastrous when it had been imposed upon the monarchy in the 1350s and 1360s. The province of Rouen said that it would grant no war taxes in a national assembly, but only in a provincial one of its own, which in practice amounted to the same thing. Only Guillaume de Tignonville, the former royal Provost of Paris, in a thoughtful personal memorandum prepared for the assembly but now known only from an old cataloguer's summary, offered a more realistic suggestion. In his view, the only answer to France's tax exhaustion was a durable peace with England, such as the English had been trying to negotiate for years.[6]

All of this bickering paled before the sustained diatribe against the King's government produced a few days later by the University of Paris on behalf of itself and the city. The preparation of their *doléances* had been attended by controversy from the outset, because of divisions within the University. The radicals dominated opinion in the faculty of arts (the largest in the University) and among the colleges of the mendicant orders. They were with the Duke of Burgundy and the Parisian politicians. They pressed for an uncompromising denunciation of the corruption and inefficiency of the royal administration. They prepared a great roll of abuses in which they recorded with a wealth of detail some of the more

egregious examples and named the guilty men. The professors of the theology faculty disagreed. They were uncomfortable about the demagoguery of the Duke of Burgundy and suspicious of his proletarian allies. Many of them also resented his sponsorship of Jean Petit's notorious treatise in defence of the murder of Louis of Orléans, in which they detected a number of dangerous heresies. They wanted a more restrained and deferential tone. In the University's internal debates, it was the radicals who prevailed. But the nominated spokesman, a theologian by the name of Benoit Gentien with strong views about Jean Petit, ignored their instructions and delivered the kind of oration that his own faculty had wanted. On 9 February 1413, he addressed the King in the presence of a crowd of Parisians so large that the proceedings had to be transferred to the great galleried courtyard of the palace, the largest space available. There, to the audible indignation of his audience, Gentien delivered a prolix and high-blown oration about the evils of civil war, in which he even-handedly denounced both sides, declined to read from the 'roll' of abuses, and made only very limited proposals for reform. Shortly after the session closed the University repudiated him. They demanded another audience at which their views could be put properly.[7]

The second audience was fixed for 13 February 1413. By the time the day came, the King had relapsed into his old condition. He remained incapable of following events for nearly four months. It was left to the Dauphin to preside in his place. The new spokesman was Eustache de Pavilly. He was a very different kind of kind of man from Benoit Gentien. He was a radical Carmelite friar, a celebrated orator and a close ally of the butchers' guilds, who were believed to pay him a retainer. Pavilly denounced the feebleness of his predecessor at length, the fruit, he said, of a misplaced timidity and an unwanted moderation. Then, when he had done, he commanded a young assistant with a booming voice to read out the whole roll of abuses before the assembled company.

It was a remarkable document. It began with a highly partisan assessment of the current tensions and the weakness of France in the face of the English, all of which was blamed on the Armagnacs, and particularly on the Count of Armagnac himself. The roll then proceeded to a review of the public finances. The government was bankrupt and had reached the limits of the country's taxable capacity. The only solution was a severe pruning of public expenditure. For many years, the main problem had been the appropriation of royal tax revenues by the princes, but the Parisian roll of abuses was silent about that, for the only significant beneficiaries since the crisis of 1411 had been the Duke of

Burgundy and his friends. Instead, they concentrated on the cost of the various royal households and on the bloated administration of the state. The budget of the King's household was said to have increased more than fivefold during his reign, while the cost of the Queen's establishment had multiplied by four. Most of the increase, it was alleged, had gone into the pockets of household officers and servants while the King, the Queen and the Dauphin had been 'quietly pillaged'. The royal demesne was dilapidated and abandoned, its revenues were embezzled by its administrators. The number of civil servants had doubled. Their salaries, fees and perquisites were out of control. Officials from the Chancellor and the Treasurer down to minor local receivers joined the public service as men of modest means and within a few years were seen filling their chests with gold and silver, holding 'pompous state' in great castles and fine urban mansions and marrying their daughters into the nobility. Friends and clients of the great received lavish pensions and grants. The whole administration of the armies was irredeemably corrupt, as the war treasurers and their minions connived in outrageous frauds, sharing the proceeds with the perpetrators. Moving beyond the peculations of the financiers and administrators, the Parisian indictment turned to broader political grievances: the paralysis of the council, the ignorance and corruption of the judges, the incapacity of the councillors of the Parlement, the rapacity of tax farmers, the fraudulent administration of the mints. The more egregious offenders were identified by name and detailed particulars given of their receipts.

It is difficult to verify all of this information from the surviving records, but it is clear that the authors of the roll had had access to much detail from within the administration. Some of the facts were too notorious to be denied, the University declared. Others had been reported to them by 'loyal men of substance and power who desire nothing but to serve your honour and interest'. The vices described had been practised for so long that only brutal remedies would now do: a root and branch reform of the administration, a forced loan from the 1,500 richest officials, severe economies in the budget of the royal households, and the revocation of all improvident assignments and grants. At the end of the reading, Eustache de Pavilly stood up to remind the Dauphin how often such complaints had been made before and how little had been done about them. This time, he said, they must be taken seriously. The whole body of delegates present shouted their approval, cheered on by the crowd of onlookers who had crammed into the courtyard to watch the spectacle.[8]

The work of reform began at once, driven forward by pressure

from the University and the streets and sponsored on the royal council by the Duke of Burgundy. The Dauphin appointed a special commission of twelve 'wise and distinguished men of great learning' to prepare a comprehensive scheme of reform. Its membership was dominated by the spokesmen of the provinces represented in the assembly and the representatives of the University and the municipality of Paris. Many of them were also councillors or pensioners of the Duke of Burgundy. As they set to work, the purges began. On 24 February 1413, at a council meeting presided over by the Dauphin and attended by John the Fearless and his son Philip Count of Charolais, an ordinance was approved suspending from their offices almost all the top financial officials in Paris. Alexandre le Boursier, the powerful receiver-general of the *aides* had enriched himself for years by easing the path of the great to grants and assignments. He was singled out in the ordinance by name. Many of the suspended officials were arrested. Others, warned in time, fled the capital or sought sanctuary in its churches. The survivors tried to hang on to their appointments by denouncing their colleagues. Another special commission, on which the University and the municipality of Paris were also represented, was appointed to examine their accounts and to consider further measures of reform.[9]

These events provoked a powerful reaction among the noblemen on the council and at court. In their eyes, the Estates-General had failed. The main reason for calling it had been the desperate need for fresh taxes, but no grant had been made. They had been alarmed by the radical tone of the delegates. They were frightened by the palpable anger on the streets of Paris, where the butchers were mobilising their supporters. The purge of the administration was profoundly resented. Many of those affected were their friends and clients. Some were wholly innocent. There was a real prospect that the princes and the higher nobility might not only lose their privileged access to the resources of the Crown, but have to disgorge what they had already gained. Shortly, John the Fearless's allies among the nobility began to fall away. The Duke of Anjou had taken fright before the assembly had even opened and left Paris for his domains. Pierre des Essarts, the royal Provost of Paris and until recently one of John the Fearless's closest collaborators, had been outraged when the University identified him in its 'roll' as one of the principal looters of the state and he found himself removed from all his offices in the financial administration. He responded by accusing the Duke of Burgundy of being the biggest looter of all. He publicly declared that John had drawn more than 2,000,000 *écus* from the royal treasury and claimed to have receipts to prove it. But before he could produce them, he was obliged to flee from Paris in

fear of his life. The Provost of the Merchants, Pierre Gentien, another man accused of peculation by the University, was suspended from his functions in the administration of the mints. He quickly shed his former Burgundian sympathies, and was shortly forced out of the municipality.[10]

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The most dangerous secession from the Burgundian cause was the Dauphin's. Alarmed by the intensifying atmosphere of violence in the capital, the Queen's brother Louis of Bavaria and Edward Duke of Bar, hitherto cautious supporters of the Burgundian regime, joined forces with the Duke of Orléans' brother Philip Count of Vertus, one of the Armagnac party's flag-bearers. Together, they persuaded the Dauphin that it was time for him to check the power of John the Fearless by taking charge of the government himself. Louis needed little encouragement. The breach with the Duke of Burgundy came over the position of the venerable Chancellor of France, Arnaud de Corbie. Arnaud, who was eighty-eight years old and had been Chancellor for quarter of a century, was said by the clerk of the Parlement to be 'so senile and weak that he hardly knew whether he was coming or going'. But his continuing service had a certain symbolic importance, for he was the only great officer of state left who was associated with neither of the warring parties. The Dauphin had refused to dismiss him after the Parisians included him in their famous 'roll' of bureaucratic corruption. At the beginning of March 1413, there was a tempestuous meeting of the royal council. As Arnaud was addressing the assembled councillors, he was interrupted by the Dauphin's chancellor, the Burgundian creature Jean de Nielles. Jean accused him of blathering and told him to get on with it. The two men exchanged abuse across the council chamber. The meeting threatened to turn into an ugly brawl when the Dauphin rose to his feet, summarily dismissed Jean de Nielles and ordered him from the room. He was replaced by Jean de Vailly, a well-regarded advocate in the Parlement, who was destined to become one of John the Fearless's most persistent enemies.[11]

The Dauphin's move precipitated a sudden crisis at the heart of the government. The Duke of Burgundy called a meeting of the great council with a view to imposing his will on the rebellious prince. The council, dominated by the Duke's allies, authorised the recruitment of an army of 2,000 men-at-arms and 1,000 bowmen under John's command. They were ostensibly meant for use against the garrisoned castles of the Armagnac princes. But it became increasingly obvious that their real purpose was to overawe the

Dauphin and his friends in Paris. Tensions mounted in the capital as John the Fearless and his allies found themselves forced into an ever closer alliance with the leaders of the Paris mob in order to retain the upper hand in government. On the streets, the hostility to the Dauphin intensified. For the next few weeks all that stood between a fragile peace and a bloody popular uprising was an informal truce between the Dauphin and the municipality by which the Parisians undertook to give two days' notice before taking up arms.[12]

Towards the end of April 1413, the Dauphin made a bold attempt to wrest the government from the hands of the Duke of Burgundy before his troops arrived. A great tournament had been arranged for May Day in the Bois de Vincennes. The plan was for the Dauphin to bring the King to Vincennes for the occasion, and under cover of the festivities to spirit him away from the capital and install the government in a temporary capital, probably on the Loire. The scheme had been devised by the Dauphin's advisers in Paris in conjunction with Pierre des Essarts. Pierre was responsible for the elaborate military preparations which were required to secure the King's escape route and prevent the Parisians from coming after them. On 27 April, Pierre and his brother arrived in great secrecy with a troop of men-at-arms outside the external gate of the Bastille. The fortress seems to have been ungarrisoned. The gate was walled up, but they broke through and hid themselves inside. From here, they sent a small detachment of soldiers to occupy the fortified bridge over the Seine at Charenton, by which the Dauphin intended to make his escape with the King. Another three or four hundred men-at-arms were assembled on the east bank of the Seine to escort the royal party once they were over the river. Unfortunately, these measures were hard to conceal. The men sent to hold the bridge were overpowered by the bridge-keepers with the help of the inhabitants of Charenton, and taken under armed guard into Paris. There, the whole plot was revealed. An emergency meeting of the royal council was called in the Duke of Burgundy's headquarters at the Hôtel de Bourgogne. The streets were in uproar. The brothers Legoix and two *écorcheurs*, Denis Chaumont and Simon Coutellier, known as Caboche, passed through the city calling the butchers and their allies to arms. They were supported by important elements of the municipality. The most active of these was Jean de Troyes, a violent street orator who was one of the *échevins* (city councillors). He and his followers spread it about that their enemies were trying to kidnap the King and the Dauphin and destroy the city.[13]

On the following morning, 28 April, some 3,000 Parisians gathered in the Place de Grève, in front of the Maison aux Piliers.

Inside the building, the Provost of the Merchants and the *échevins* had gathered with the captains of the watch and a group of prominent citizens. The Provost of the Merchants, who had succeeded Pierre Gentien the month before, was a rich money-changer called André Épernon. He was a weak man: colourless, indecisive and easily overborne. He tried to persuade the crowd outside to disperse. They refused to listen. Instead, they crammed through the lanes east of the Place de Grève and made for the Bastille. Their leaders were a disparate group of allies of convenience. Prominent among them was a small body of John the Fearless's household knights, led by one of his chamberlains, Elyon de Jacqueville, who served as his liaison with the mobsters. They were accompanied by Jean de Troyes and the leaders of the butchers and *écorcheurs*. One of them, the *écorcheur* Caboche, whose low status and brutish nickname symbolised for many the excesses of the proletarian revolution, shortly gave his name to the whole movement. With them went a large band of masters of the University and a group of radicals from the government offices, most of them pensioners or protégés of John the Fearless. One of them was Eustache de Laitre, the President of the Chambre des Comptes. Another was one of the King's private secretaries Guillaume Barraut, together with his strident wife who became one of the chief organisers and propagandists of the revolution.

Inside the Bastille, Pierre des Essarts and his small company of men feared for their lives. There were not enough of them to defend the fortress. He appeared at a window high up in the west wall. From here he looked down on a sea of armed men. The crowd had by now swelled to about 20,000 and filled the whole of the Rue Saint-Antoine. He tried to reason with them. He had come on the orders of the Dauphin, he said. He intended no harm to the King or the city. He wanted nothing more than to be allowed to withdraw, never to return without their leave. He produced the Dauphin's sealed letters and waved them about. The mob yelled back abuse and accusations of treason. They swore not to leave until they had got their hands on him. They began to prepare an assault on the walls. They declared their intention of destroying the whole fortress. Although the Duke of Burgundy's retainers were at the head of the mob, events were rapidly moving out of their control. In the early afternoon, John the Fearless himself appeared in the open space in front of the Bastille. He urged the crowd not to commit *lèse-majesté* by attacking a royal fortress. He would see to it that Pierre des Essarts was surrendered. Meanwhile, he urged them to disperse.[14]

The assault was called off, but the crowd did not disperse. The

revelation that the Dauphin was behind Pierre des Essarts' plot had raised them to a fresh pitch of fury. They determined to settle scores with Louis of Guyenne and the advisers who had put him up to this. The Dauphin's residence was a few hundred yards away in a building called the Hôtel-Neuf in the Rue de Pute-y-Musse, a quarter best known for the stews and brothels that had served the vast personnel of the royal court in better days (modern delicacy has renamed it the Rue du Petit-Musc). Elyon de Jacqueville left a curtain of armed men to guard the exits from the Bastille, and then made his way towards the Hôtel-Neuf, accompanied by Jean de Troyes, the leaders of the butchers and several hundred armed men, carrying the banner of the city before them. John the Fearless just had time to ride ahead of them, enter the building and forewarn the Dauphin. As they discussed what to do, the Parisians could already be seen through the windows, advancing on the gate. They demanded to speak to the Dauphin. John the Fearless advised him to placate them. The prince came to the window. 'My friends,' he said, 'what has brought you here? Why all this tumult? I am ready to hear you and to do your will.' The *échevin* Jean de Troyes acted as their spokesman. To raucous cheers from the crowd, he demanded that the Dauphin deliver up the 'traitors' who had turned him against them. The Dauphin replied that these men were his faithful advisers. What had they done wrong that he should surrender them? Jean de Troyes produced a sheet of paper with fifty names on it, headed by the Dauphin's new chancellor Jean de Vailly. He passed it up to the Dauphin and called on him to read it out. The Dauphin, outraged, withdrew from the window. The mob responded by breaking down the doors of the mansion and forcing their way into the Dauphin's chamber, where the young prince was cowering with his attendants and councillors. There they seized Jean de Vailly, together with the Dauphin's chief counsellor the Duke of Bar, his first chamberlain Jacques de la Rivière, four of his *valets de chambre* and his trencherman. One of the valets had to be torn from the arms of the Duchess of Guyenne, John the Fearless's daughter, who had tried to protect him.

The Dauphin recognised several members of the Duke of Burgundy's household among the ringleaders. Turning to his father-in-law, he accused him to his face of directing the violence. John curtly replied that he would be better informed when he had cooled down. Then, as if to confirm the truth of the Dauphin's accusation, he left with the leaders of the mob and escorted the prisoners to the Hôtel de Bourgogne. Two days later, they were removed and locked up in the Louvre. Shortly, they were joined there by Pierre des Essarts. He had been talked into surrendering the Bastille by John

the Fearless, who told him that he would be torn limb from limb if he tried to hold out. John promised to guarantee his safety, if necessary 'with his own body'.[15]

The events of 28 April 1413 opened a new reign of terror in Paris. The mob adopted white hoods as the uniform of their revolution. They wore them everywhere in public, and forced them on noblemen, ecclesiastics, officials, even the Queen's ladies of honour. It was a conscious echo of the urban revolutions of the 1380s, when white hoods had been worn by the militant radicals of Ghent. A man-hunt began for those friends of the Dauphin on Jean de Troyes' list who had not been found in the Hôtel-Neuf. Some of them, often men of no importance, were casually murdered, the victims of obscure rumours, grudges or simple mistakes. A servant of Jean de Berry believed to have planned to burn the city was bludgeoned to death. A secretary of the King, accused of betraying uncertain secrets to unknown enemies, had his head split open with an axe and his body thrown into the Seine. A man whose sole offence was to protest at the violence of the mob was lynched in the street. A special commission was appointed to seek out those whose hearts were not with the revolution. Their names were proclaimed by criers at street corners. Some sixty prominent citizens were thrown into prison at the beginning of May, either because they were thought to be Armagnacs or else because they had spoken out against the violence of 28 April. Panic spread through the mansions of the nobility and the apartments of the Hôtel Saint-Pol. Philip Count of Vertus fled the city in disguise. Charles of Orléans' surgeon abandoned his possessions and escaped 'half-naked' into the countryside. Even loyal Burgundian retainers like the lord of Croy and Raoul Le Maire, the provost of St Donatien in Bruges, joined the exodus of frightened men who fled the capital for fear of worse.[16]

At first, the menacing atmosphere on the streets served the Duke of Burgundy's purposes well. It enabled him to intimidate the Dauphin, whose approval of formal acts of government was his only link with legality and the sole source of his authority outside Paris. The Dauphin became a prisoner. He was required to move his household to the Hôtel Saint-Pol. Guards were posted at every entrance to stop him escaping. Jean de Troyes was appointed as captain of the palace to watch his every move. Everyone passing out of the city gates was stopped and searched for illicit letters, lest the Dauphin try to appeal for support outside the capital. At the beginning of May 1413, the mob invaded the palace and forced the prince to put on the white hood of the revolution, while their spokesman delivered a stern lecture about his idle and dissolute ways and his susceptibility to the advice of traitors. Over the

following days, the pleasure-loving young man was subjected to a programme of ideological re-education. He was obliged to listen to frequent and interminable harangues from the Carmelite firebrand Eustache de Pavilly and others. He was pressed to mend his style of life. He was accused of having driven his father to insanity by his wayward habits. He was reminded of the ignominious death of Louis of Orléans and other examples of the fate of tyrants drawn from history and scripture. He was threatened with disinheritance in favour of his younger brother. The Parisians had three main demands. They wanted retribution against the prisoners in the Louvre, whom they regarded as responsible for the May Day plot. They wanted the council and the royal households purged of their enemies, and their own nominees installed in their place. And they wanted faster progress towards the reform of the administration. The Dauphin yielded the minimum necessary to avoid bloodshed. He agreed to reappoint the Burgundian stalwart Jean de Nielles as his chancellor. He put the defence of Paris in the hands of the mob leaders, nominating Elyon de Jacqueville as Captain of Paris and putting the fortified bridges at Charenton and Saint-Cloud into the hands of prominent Cabochians. The Duke of Burgundy was appointed captain of the Bastille, and promptly put in Elyon de Jacqueville as his deputy there. These concessions only whetted the appetite for more. On 11 May, the Provost of the Merchants and the four *échevins* appeared at the Hôtel Saint-Pol with several thousand Parisians at their backs. They produced a roll with the names of sixty 'traitors' whom they wanted arrested, including the Dauphin's confessor, the Queen's personal treasurer and the principal financial officers of the King's household, together with several of his secretaries. When the Dauphin declined to receive it, they forced him take it and read it out, and then seized those of the alleged traitors who could be found in the palace, about twenty in all.[17]

A few days after this incident, the King made a brief and partial recovery, but it is far from clear that he was capable of making decisions or even of understanding what was going on. On 18 May 1413, as he walked in procession to Notre-Dame to give thanks for his renewed health, he was met in the street by the Provost of the Merchants and the *échevins* who presented him with a white hood and demanded that he wear it. Charles agreed with good grace. But his companions, who included much of the court nobility, the Rector of the University and the principal officers of the Parlement, made no secret of their disgust. The Parisians noticed the sneers and resolved to eliminate the last residues of resistance in the Hôtel Saint-Pol. On 20 May, the municipality ordered all the gates of Paris to be closed and the watch to be arrayed in the streets. Two days

later, on the 22nd, the Provost of the Merchants entered the Hôtel Saint-Pol, accompanied by his four *échevins*, Elyon de Jacqueville, Eustache de Pavilly and a large troop of soldiers. The palace was impossible to defend. Occupying a vast site at the eastern extremity of the city between the Rue Saint-Antoine and the Seine, the halls, apartments, chapels, offices and commons were spread among several buildings, separated by three large galleried courtyards and by extensive gardens, stables and a menagerie. Apart from the perimeter wall and a single tower used for storing cash and precious objects, it was unfortified. It so happened that on the 22nd, the palace was unusually full. A large company of noblemen and ecclesiastics had gathered for the wedding of the Queen's brother Louis of Bavaria, which was due to take place on the following day. The Parisian delegation was received in the King's great chamber by Charles VI, the Queen and the Dauphin. The entire court crowded in to see what would happen, including the Dukes of Berry, Burgundy, Lorraine and Bavaria and the Chancellor and Constable of France. Eustache de Pavilly acted as the Parisians' spokesman. He harangued the assembled company for four hours, from eleven o'clock in the morning to three o'clock in the afternoon. Much of this exhausting oration was devoted to justifying the violence to which the Dauphin and his household had been subjected since the end of April. Weeds were smothering the beauty of the *fleur-de-lys,* he declared; the good gardener must tear them out by the roots. The prisoners in the Louvre would have to be dealt with as they deserved. There were men still bent on obstructing the reform of the state. They too would have to be weeded out.

By the time that the Carmelite had finished, an armed mob several thousand strong had filled the courtyards of the palace, spilling out into the streets outside. The Duke of Burgundy went downstairs to protest. He demanded to know why they had come armed into the King's palace and what they wanted. The *échevin* Jean de Troyes replied on their behalf. They had come, he said, for the good of the King and the realm, and would not leave until they had taken custody of the traitors still at large. He handed the Duke another list. The Duke returned with it to the King's chamber. The King seems to have sat insensible though all this. The assembled noblemen and officers stood mute. The only person with the spirit to resist was the Queen, for Jean de Troyes' list was found to include her brother, her confessor, her private secretary, several of her household knights and ten of her ladies in waiting. She demanded that the Duke of Burgundy and the Dauphin should confront the crowd. At least they should be persuaded to allow a week's respite so that the wedding could go ahead as planned. The

Dauphin broke down in tears, and had to be told to pull himself together by his father-in-law. The two of them returned together to talk to the crowd. They came back empty-handed. The men below were implacable. Inside the palace, Elyon de Jacqueville had already entered the Dauphin's private apartments with his soldiers and seized some of the wanted people including five of the Dauphin's household officers and several of his wife's ladies. He then broke into the Queen's apartments and arrested Louis of Bavaria and several of Isabelle's ladies. The rest, fearing a massacre, calmly descended the stairs and surrendered to the soldiers waiting below. They were placed on horses, two by two, and escorted through the streets. The ladies and some of the more distinguished prisoners were taken to the Louvre. The rest were put in the Conciergerie, the grim state prison in the gatehouse of the royal palace on the Cité.[18]

Two days later, on 24 May 1413, the surrender of the court was complete. Jean de Troyes returned to the Hôtel Saint-Pol with the usual crowd of armed, white-hooded mobsters. Surrounded by his confederates, he entered the hall where the King was presiding over a council meeting and presented his latest demands. The first and principal demand was that the King should approve a comprehensive draft ordinance that had been prepared by the special reform commission nominated after the closure of the Estates-General. The council had already resigned itself to that, and the Chancellor signified their consent without demur. Next, the *échevin* demanded that all those who had been arrested should be dismissed from their offices at court and replaced by others more acceptable to the people. The Chancellor asked who these others might be. He was given a list of what the official historiographer called 'obscure and low-born people', which he undertook to study. Third, they required the publication of a royal ordinance ratifying the violence of the 22nd. This occasioned a little more discussion, but was conceded on the advice of the Duke of Berry. The surrender of the council was the last notable public act of the aged Arnaud de Corbie. A few days afterwards, he was finally forced out of office, against the wishes of the court, by 'lethal threats' from the streets. He was replaced by Eustache de Laitre, the President of the Chambre des Comptes. Eustache was a client of the Duke of Burgundy and an active advocate of his reform programme, who was politically close to the Cabochians.[19]

On 26 and 27 May 1413, the great reform ordinance was duly registered at a *lit de justice*, the solemn session of the Parlement at which the King's presence overrode the objections of the permanent judges of the court. This famous document, 258 articles long and

requiring six or seven hours to read, was known as the *Ordonnance Cabochienne* after the leader of the *écorcheurs*, even though Caboche himself had had nothing to do with it. The ordinance is an extraordinary mixture of the sublime and the trivial, a compilation of all the reform ordinances that had failed in a century of previous attempts, and a veritable encyclopaedia of the malpractices that enlightened opinion detected in the French state of the early fifteenth century. It limited the number of officials, simplifying administrative procedures, merging posts and abolishing large numbers of sinecures or near-sinecures. It regulated the remuneration of the King's servants right down to the wages of his laundrywoman. It reduced or abolished the perquisites of a large number of royal servants, some of them identified by name. It limited administrative and judicial fees. It restricted grants out of tax revenues or the income of the royal demesne. It revoked some significant past grants. It reorganised the administration of the mints, the royal demesne, the *aides* and the courts of law. Above all, it attacked one of the root causes of the bankruptcy of the French state, the appropriation of the *aides*. Unpaid assignments currently in issue were to be cancelled and new ones forbidden. In addition, a serious attempt was made to deal with outright grants to the princes and the royal family of the *aides* collected in their domains. They were not forbidden. But payment was suspended for three years, and some of the grantees, notably the Queen and the Dauphin, were required to lend back to the Crown half of all that they had received since 1409. Even these measures, which added up to a complete transformation of the largest bureaucracy in Europe, were regarded as mere work in progress. The final article authorised the commission that had prepared it to continue their work and empowered them to add additional articles of the ordinance as they thought fit.[20]

The executions began early in June. The King had been obliged to appoint a special commission to try the prisoners in the Conciergerie and the Louvre. Most of them were friends and protégés of the princes. Some were being held under the nominal protection of the Duke of Burgundy. According to the official circular distributed to the towns after the crisis had passed, they were called upon to answer trumped-up charges, and some of them were tortured to extract admissions. Jacques de la Rivière, the Dauphin's handsome, talented, multilingual chamberlain, who was accused of being the deviser of the May Day plot, cheated the executioners by breaking his skull against the stone wall of his prison. They beheaded his corpse instead. The Dauphin's valets and trencherman, young men and in political terms very minor figures,

were led to their deaths a few days later. They were followed by the captain of the men sent to seize the bridge of Charenton. Pierre des Essarts was condemned to death in spite of John the Fearless's promise to protect him 'with his own body'. Perhaps fortunately for him, he was out of his mind when the time came. The crowd had not forgotten that he had once been their hero. They wept copiously as he was escorted, laughing hysterically, to his execution. The officers of the Châtelet stuck his head on a pike three feet higher than all the others, and hung his corpse in chains from the top of the gibbet of Montfaucon. The body of Jean de Montaigu, whose downfall he had engineered, had hung there only a few months before. Others noticed how quickly the wheel of fortune had turned. In a grim commentary on the unstable times, the Duke of Brabant had once told Pierre des Essarts that it had taken Montaigu twenty-two years to lose his head, 'but it shouldn't take you more than three'.[21]

John the Fearless had lost control of the forces that he had unleashed. The objectives of the mob were not the same as his. He was interested in maintaining his hold on power and, like the University and much of the Parisian elite, in reforming the machinery of the state. The mob approved of the reform programme but was moved mainly by economic grievances, aggravated by the class resentments that were endemic in the industrial cities of the late middle ages. It is the fate of demagogues to be controlled by their followers. Contemporaries may well have been right to see John's hand in the Dauphin's humiliation in the Hôtel-Neuf on 28 April. But his inability to control the violence of the mob or turn it to his own ends had been cruelly exposed in the Hôtel Saint-Pol on 22 May. More than any other incident, this event divided John's supporters, arousing latent but powerful class feelings on both sides. The Duke's residual support among the princes, which was already strained, all but vanished as his allies humiliated the King, imprisoned their friends and relatives and reduced the city streets to violence and chaos. Christine de Pisan's *Livre de la Paix,* much of which was written in the immediate aftermath of these events, is filled with the fear of anarchy and violence. She foresaw mass murder and open war on the rich as the partisans of a 'mad government of low and bestial people' helped themselves to their enemies' money chests and wine cellars. As so often, the novelist caught the emotions of the world of minor courtiers, cultivated administrators and academics in which she moved, a world at once open to ideas, yet socially profoundly conservative.[22]

The University, for years the leading proponent of the reform of the state and a dependable ally of the dukes of Burgundy, was split

by the extremes to which their policies were being carried. That highly political theologian Jean Gerson, in principle a supporter of reform, complained that people who could hardly be called the feet of the body politic had presumed to direct the head, setting up a tyranny which was a perversion of the godly state. Knights, clergy, solid bourgeois, were being held in subjection by the 'outrageous temerity of mere nobodies'. Even Eustache de Pavilly, so often the radicals' spokesman on public occasions, found the butchers' brutish manners hard to bear. The leaders of the University had tacitly supported the attack on the Hôtel-Neuf in April, but pointedly refused to endorse the invasion of the Hôtel Saint-Pol in May. The Parisian patriciate were equally horrified by both. These men, the comfortably-off businessmen who filled the local watch committees and the council of the Provost of the Merchants, were appalled by the violence of Jean de Troyes and the tyranny of the uncouth butchers and the despised *écorcheurs*. They had condemned the riots in the Rue de Pute-y-Musse at the next meeting of the municipality, and sent a message of cringing apology to the Dauphin. A gulf opened up between the three centres of the revolution: the Maison aux Piliers, the Grande Boucherie and the Hôtel de Bourgogne. John the Fearless found himself caught in a vicious circle. The more support he lost among respectable opinion in the municipality and the University, the more he depended on the Cabochians and other extremists to keep him in power. The King's advocate Jean Jouvenel, a loyal public servant and another instinctive reformer, obtained an audience of the Duke after many hours of waiting unbidden in his anteroom, in order to warn him about his dangerous alliances. His association with the butchers, he said, dishonoured him and undermined his cause. The Duke heard him out, before replying that the support of the butchers was politically indispensable. He neither could nor would renounce it.[23]

The King, who had been 'absent' since the end of May, made a partial recovery in the first few days of July and learned for the first time of the executions. He began to lend himself actively to the attempts of his son and those around him to rid themselves of the Duke of Burgundy and his friends. Father and son were supported by a disparate but large and increasingly organised coalition of men who wanted nothing more than peace and order. Relations between the Duke and the Dauphin plumbed fresh depths. Over the past weeks, resentment of his father-in-law had turned to loathing in the young man's breast. Shortly after the King's recovery, there was an ugly brawl in the Hôtel Saint-Pol during a ball given by the Dauphin. Elyon de Jacqueville, who shared the instinctive puritanism common to most political extremists, entered the

Dauphin's apartments in the midst of the revelry, rebuked him for dishonouring the title of a son of France by his 'dissolute dancing', and began to abuse his guests. The Dauphin attacked him with a dagger and stabbed him three times in the chest. The Parisian garrison of the palace broke down the doors and burst in, swords in hand, to protect him. The Duke of Burgundy arrived just in time to prevent a massacre. As for Jacqueville, he survived only because of the double cuirass that he was wearing under his tunic. There were to be no more balls. The Dauphin suffered a serious breakdown, taking to his bed and coughing up blood.

Meanwhile the butchers and their allies intensified their grip on the life of the capital. The mass of 'extraordinary' commissions pressed on with their labours with austere and intrusive zeal. There were commissions to reform the administration, to purge the civil service, to reconstruct the royal finances, to try the prisoners of the Hôtel-Neuf and the Hôtel Saint-Pol, to seize and sell off the property of suspected Armagnacs, to extract money from Parisians thought to be rich or unsympathetic to the regime. At least two dozen more commissions were created between March and July, most of them demanded and largely staffed by the Cabochians. The steady stream of refugees fleeing the violence of Paris turned into a flood. The Duke of Berry, seventy-three years old and in poor health, found himself abandoned by his attendants and friends and left alone in the Hôtel de Nesle. He was forced to take refuge with his physician in the cloister of Notre-Dame, still wearing the white hood forced on him by the mob. 'How long must we submit to the tyranny of these wicked people?' he plaintively asked of his fellow refugee, Jean Jouvenel.[24]

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The mounting threat from the English added to John's problem. He had personally taken charge of France's defence against the English at the beginning of March 1413.[25] But it was obvious that he could do nothing to check them. Some people, remembering the invasion of the Earl of Arundel, doubted whether he really wanted to. A day or two after the attack on the Hôtel-Neuf the leading politicians of the University met secretly in the rooms of Eustache de Pavilly in the Carmelite convent. They were a disturbed and divided group of men, whose only common sentiment was their fear of England. Frightened for the future of France, the dynasty and the social order, they resolved to consult a group of hermits, mystics and holy women. All of these seers thought that they saw in current events the harbingers of a change of dynasty. Some thought the Valois line cursed. One recounted a vision in which she saw a monstrous image

of the King of England as high as the towers of Notre-Dame, enthroned in state in front of the cathedral, surrounded by black-robed acolytes, excommunicating the King of France. The lawyer Jean Jouvenel thought that the real problem lay in the divisions of the princes. Without a durable peace between them, he observed with uncanny prescience, they would bid against each other for English support and France would be doomed.[26]

The effect could be seen already on the march of Gascony, where the English had moved to exploit the divisions of France with the tacit support of the disaffected Armagnac princes. The Duke of Clarence had by now returned to England with most of his army. But Thomas Beaufort Earl of Dorset stayed behind as Lieutenant with 240 English men-at-arms and 1,000 archers, in addition to a large force of Gascons, encouraged by the evidence of a revival of English arms. Dorset was an aggressive captain who made good use of the largest Anglo-Gascon army to operate in the duchy since the 1370s. His companies pushed up the Dordogne into Périgord, capturing the important castle of Biron. In March they crossed the Gironde, laid siege to the French castle of Talmont at the head of the estuary, captured the powerful fortress of Soubise at the mouth of the Charente, and occupied much of the coastal region of Saintonge and Poitou. In May, Dorset was operating in the county of Angoulême, Orléanist territory, with a reported 5,000 men. In July, he was preparing to besiege Montendre, one of the principal fortresses on the east side of the Gironde. There was virtually no local opposition. Many of the smaller towns freely opened their gates in return for the promise of relief from the wearing rounds of taxation imposed by the French commanders of the march year upon year. La Rochelle, the only significant French port south of the Loire, was threatened.[27]

The French government stood by helplessly. Marshal Boucicaut had been in Languedoc since March, trying to recruit an army to contain the English. But he could do nothing without the pervasive local networks of the houses of Albret and Armagnac which had been the backbone of French military operations in the region for more than forty years. In May 1413, Jacques d'Heilly returned to the northern march, with instructions to halt the English advance and push them back to the Gironde. It was an unhappy experience. He found his efforts actively obstructed by the officers of Charles of Orléans and Jean de Berry, the dominant territorial magnates of the region. Charles's captain at Châteauneuf, whose garrison controlled one of the principal bridges over the Charente, allowed the English army to cross the river without opposition and then joined forces with them as they advanced into northern Saintonge. In return, the

English commanders were careful not to attack the property of the house of Orléans and its partisans. On the march of Poitou, the local officials of Jean de Berry allowed the English to buy supplies freely. Jacques d'Heilly appealed to Jean's two principal officers, Arnaud-Guilhem de Barbazan and Jean de Torsay. Arnaud-Guilhem was a native of Bigorre and a protégé of Louis of Orléans who had taken service with the Duke of Berry after Louis' death. He was the marshal of Poitou and captain of the fortress of Lusignan. Jean de Torsay was the owner of several castles of the march, and the Duke's seneschal of Poitou. Both men sat on their hands, returning evasive answers to Jacques d'Heilly's letters and refusing to supply him with troops or even admit him into their castles.[28]

In Paris, the response to these setbacks was a further bout of recrimination, as the Cabochians claimed the patriotic cause for their own. With the financial departments reduced to chaos by successive purges, the municipality took it upon itself to raise a forced loan of 80,000 *écus* to fund a counter-attack. The business of extracting this sum quickly took on the colours of a class war, as yet another Cabochian special commission singled out their richer opponents for punitive assessments. Known or suspected Armagnacs were mobbed or imprisoned or had soldiers billeted on them to make them pay. Jean Gerson was assessed for a large 'loan'. When he refused to pay, his house was sacked by a mob, his furniture carried off and he himself forced into hiding in the roof voids of Notre-Dame cathedral. For the rest of his life he would be counted among the Duke of Burgundy's most eloquent and persistent enemies. Jean Jouvenel was assessed for the enormous sum of 2,000 *écus*, presumably because he had been a councillor of Louis of Orléans. He appealed to the Parlement, but the commission had him shut in the Petit Châtelet until the money was paid. There was a damaging row with the University when the commission seized the Lendit offerings of the abbey of Saint-Denis and began to impose assessments on some prominent professors. Ill-feeling against the Cabochians mounted. A great victory over the English would no doubt have healed these fractures within the radical alliance. But there was to be no great victory. Jacques d'Heilly eventually managed to raise an army of 4,000 men on the march of Poitou. However, his counter-attack collapsed when he landed from the sea near Soubise and was captured together with much of his company. He was shipped to England at the end of the summer, where he passed several years incarcerated in the bleak fenland castle of Wisbech.[29]

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As the long summer wore on the Dauphin sent increasingly frantic appeals for help to the Armagnac princes, all of whom (except for the Duke of Berry) had left Paris and were watching events from afar. During the May days, when it became obvious that support for the Burgundian cause was draining away, the princes plucked up their courage and began to plot their return to power. The Count of Alençon was once again the driving force. In about the middle of May 1413 he held a conference of the old leaders of the league of Gien, including representatives of the Dukes of Orléans, Bourbon and Brittany. It was held in the castle of Louis of Anjou at Sablé in Maine. A month later Alençon and his Norman allies gathered their armed retainers at Verneuil in Perche some eighty miles from Paris. On the other side of the capital Clignet de Bréban began to organise a second army in the Orléans domains of Champagne and Brie to complete the investiture of the city from the east and south. A third Armagnac army was gathering in the domains of the Duke of Berry in Berry and Auvergne. The idea was to occupy the northern Île de France, block off contact between the Duke of Burgundy and his domains in the Low Countries and starve the city into surrender. The opening of the campaign was fixed for Midsummer's Day, 24 June 1413.[30]

Unlike his more extreme allies the Duke of Burgundy was a realistic politician. He could see how weak his position had become. He opened negotiations with his adversaries as soon as they began to gather their forces. As the pressure on him mounted he found a surprising ally in the Duke of Berry. In his dotage the Duke still had a name to conjure with but he was old, ill and malleable. After extended preliminaries a three-day conference opened on 10 July 1413, at first in the castle of Ivry on the Eure and then at the Armagnacs' headquarters at Verneuil. The delegation from Paris nominally represented the King, the Duke of Burgundy and the Duke of Berry. But in reality it represented only John the Fearless. Its leading member was his councillor Jean de Thoisy, Bishop of Tournai, and most of the others were the Duke's partisans. Their instructions were limited. They came only to listen. The princes summarised their grievances and made their demands. They wanted a peace conference between the principals at which a solid agreement could be drawn up to put the terms of the peace of Auxerre into effect, restore peace in Paris and allow the Armagnacs to resume their place among the King's councillors. Otherwise they would fight 'with fire and blood' to remove the King from the clutches of the Parisians. If necessary they would remove the monarchy permanently from Paris.[31]

The royal council considered the Armagnac demands on 13 July

1413. Jean de Thoisy thought that they should be conceded. It was the only alternative to chaos and class war in the capital. The opposition came from the Cabochians. It was obvious that there would be no place for them in any compromise peace likely to be agreed with the Armagnacs. The Provost of the Merchants' council met separately to discuss the situation. They were divided. But while the discussion was in progress Elyon de Jacqueville burst into the council chamber followed by the *écorcheurs* Denis Chaumont and Simon Caboche and about a hundred armed men. The peace was just a trick, they cried. Caboche delivered a violent harangue. The Armagnacs, he said, were the same people who within the last two years had wasted the Île de France and tried to set up another king. Once they had possession of the royal family they would confiscate the Parisians' weapons and street chains and abolish the privileges of the city. 'Whoever dares to approve this peace, whatever be his authority,' he declared, 'we shall hold them to be traitors to the King and the city of Paris.' They shouted down the councillors and broke up the meeting. The Cabochians then withdrew to plan their next move. One of them, the King's secretary Guillaume Barraut, drew up letters in his name denying that he or the Dauphin were under any pressure in Paris and repudiating the Armagnac leaders as enemies and traitors. These documents were sealed by the complaisant Burgundian Chancellor Eustache de Laitre and distributed throughout France along with libellous pamphlets against the Armagnac princes. They called on all citizens to take up arms against the Armagnac companies prowling around the suburbs of the capital. They drew up lists of some 1,600 people associated with the Dauphin or suspected of trying to promote peace between the princes, whom they planned to imprison or kill. But Jacqueville and his friends no longer had the support to carry out these dire threats. On the evening of the abortive meeting of the municipality the Paris watch committees, who were drawn from the better-off inhabitants, met in a secret location. All of them except for the representatives of the parish of St Eustache (the Les Halles quarter) agreed to support the peace negotiations. The commissioners appointed to try the prisoners of the Louvre and the Conciergerie sensed which way the tide was moving. They quietly began to release the Queen's ladies and the more inoffensive courtiers. They would have released the Dukes of Bar and Bavaria as well if Jean de Troyes had not stopped them.[32]

The peace conference opened at Pontoise outside Paris on 22 July 1413. The proceedings began with the appearance of a large Armagnac embassy. Their spokesman delivered an angry speech. The princes, he said, had been outraged by the indignities heaped

upon the monarchy. The King, the Queen and the Dauphin were practically prisoners in the Hôtel Saint-Pol. The authority of the Crown had been set at naught by the Provost of the Merchants and *échevins* of Paris in collaboration with a coalition of vulgar brawlers. Those noblemen who were still in the capital and not in prison had been unable to leave their houses. Jobs at court and in government had been conferred on low-born incompetents. The peace of Auxerre had been cast aside almost as soon as it had been made. In the absence of any properly constituted government the princes declared themselves to be the representatives of the public interest. The spokesman set out their proposals. They were surprisingly moderate in the circumstances: an end to violence; the recall of Clignet de Bréban and his companies, who were wasting the territory south-east of Paris; an extraordinary commission to re-establish peace and justice; and an amnesty for the Parisians. Meanwhile they wanted an audience with the King, the Queen and the Dauphin in a provincial city like Rouen or Chartres or a royal fortress like Melun or Montargis, but not in Paris. There followed a week of difficult negotiations. The delay was due mainly to the resistance of the Duke of Burgundy, who objected to the idea of his rivals having access to the King in a place where he would have no control over the outcome. But the Duke of Berry thought that the terms on offer were reasonable and the tide of opinion was with him. Agreement was ultimately reached, subject to the King's approval, on substantially the terms proposed by the Armagnacs.[33]

On 1 August 1413 the Dukes of Burgundy and Berry returned to Paris bringing with them the text of the draft treaty. Their arrival was followed by a four-day crisis in the capital played out under a sweltering sky in one of the worst heatwaves for years. The draft was presented to the royal council later that day. They supported the peace but were afraid of the reaction on the streets. They had good reason to be afraid. In the midst of their deliberations Jean de Troyes, the butchers Legoix and Saint-Yon and the *écorcheur* Caboche arrived with their supporters and forced their way into the council chamber. They demanded to see the draft. The councillors showed it to them. But they did not dare to adopt it in the presence of the mob's leaders. Instead they put off the evil moment by suggesting a pause for consultations with the main interested parties in the city.[34]

The Provost of the Merchants and the *échevins* considered the document at the Maison aux Piliers on the following day. It was a stormy meeting. The radicals were present in force. Henri de Troyes, the son of the *échevin*, arrived with a large armed guard and postured before the assembly, denouncing the peace as a trick

before walking out. ‘Some people have too much blood up,’ he said as he left; ‘it is about time we took some of it out with the point of a sword.’ Like the royal council, the Provost of the Merchants and most of the *échevins* were firmly committed to the treaty. But, oppressed by the armed men crowded around the room, they adopted the same subterfuge as the council had. They decided to refer the question to the local assemblies of each quarter and defer a decision to the following day. Jean de Troyes and the brothers Legoix objected to this. They knew that they could intimidate the city council whereas the local assemblies, dispersed across Paris and dominated by well-to-do citizens, were likely to endorse the peace. There was a violent debate, at the end of which the Cabochians were outvoted. They threatened violence. But there were other trades with strong right arms willing to defend the peace, ‘as many die-casters as butchers in Paris’ as one councillor shouted back at Jean de Troyes. The Cabochians called for discussion to be adjourned for three days. They wanted time to muster their strength. But the council, sensing things going their way, refused. The Armagnac princes were expecting an answer. Their armies had now crossed the Seine and were waiting for their orders on the banks of the Oise. The companies of Clignet de Bréban and the English and Dutch mercenaries of Charles of Orléans were reported to be massing on the Loire.[35]

August 3rd was the day on which all the constituencies, the *grand corps*, the University, the clergy and the quarters of the city were due to hold their own assemblies. Jean de Troyes did his best to preempt them. He summoned a meeting of their representatives early in the morning in the cloister of the Benedictine priory of St Eloy on the Île de la Cité. The cloister, buried in the lacework of lanes that filled the island before the devastation worked in the 1860s by Baron Haussmann, had been a traditional centre of radical agitation ever since the earlier revolution of Étienne Marcel sixty years before. The *quarteniers*, who acted as leaders of the local watch committees, had been asked to appear first. They were thought to be the most persuadable. Jean de Troyes had prepared handbills denouncing the Armagnacs and their treaty, which were handed to them as they arrived. But as he began his harangue the first representatives of the Parlement appeared before they were bidden. Their spokesman was Jean Jouvenel, the King’s advocate. He denounced the handbill to a spontaneous shout of approval. ‘Peace, peace,’ the *quarteniers* cried. Jean de Troyes’ handbills were snatched out of his hands and torn up before his eyes. In the event every one of the Parisian constituencies approved the treaty, except for the districts around Les Halles and the Hôtel de Bourgogne. The

Parisians reported their opinion at once to the King and the Dauphin at the Hôtel Saint-Pol for fear that the Cabochians would stop them if they left it any longer. The Duke of Burgundy was visibly disconcerted. 'This is not the right way to do things,' he protested to Jean Jouvenel, who was standing in the great hall with the delegation of the Parlement. 'The butchers' tactics leave us no other way,' the lawyer replied. The Dauphin appeared at a window of the palace to announce to the jubilant crowd below that the treaty would be approved. The Duke of Burgundy had lost.[36]

As soon as the meeting was over the Dauphin took steps to wrest control of the streets from the Cabochians. With most of his natural supporters in prison, his chief collaborator in this enterprise was a Breton knight, Tanneguy du Châtel, who was nominated as Provost of Paris and put in control of the Châtelet.[37] Now in his early forties, Tanneguy was destined to become one of the pivotal political figures of the following years. He was the classic Breton military adventurer: a minor nobleman from Finistère who had made his name as an aggressive jouster and duellist, a courageous participant in the seaborne raids on the English coast and a skilful captain of the Duke of Anjou's mercenary companies in Italy. He had served briefly as a chamberlain in the household of Louis of Orléans, who liked to be surrounded by men of his kind. But Tanneguy seems to have had no fixed loyalty to causes, only to individuals. By 1412 he had attached himself to the Dauphin and served him with single-minded devotion, becoming his closest political confidant and as Marshal of Guyenne his chief military officer. His cunning and ruthless energy were to prove invaluable to the inexperienced young prince.[38]

Throughout the night of 3–4 August Paris was alive with noise, light and movement. All loyal citizens were summoned to appear armed in the Rue Saint-Antoine in front of the Hôtel Saint-Pol on the following morning to support the Dauphin. Across the city swelling crowds of loyalists took to the streets, weapons in hand. They lit bonfires at the street crossings and organised armed patrols. Late that night the *écorcheurs* Denis Chaumont and Simon Caboche, accompanied by the royal secretary Guillaume Barraut, tried to recover the initiative. They seized the Maison aux Piliers with a troop of some 400 hired men-at-arms and a corps of crossbowmen and started to fortify it for a last-ditch defence. In the early hours of the morning about 1,000 men appeared in the Place de Grève to support them. But they were soon heavily outnumbered. Some 2,000–3,000 armed supporters of the Dauphin assembled overnight in the nearby cloister of the church of St Germain l'Auxerrois beneath the shadow of the Louvre, waiting for the showdown the

next morning.

John the Fearless tried to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. He was desperate to avoid an open conflict in the streets which could only result in the destruction of his Parisian allies. But at the same time he was unwilling to lend his support to a working-class revolution which would finally wreck the chances of a deal with the other princes. He tried in vain to persuade both mobs to disperse. Returning to the Hôtel Saint-Pol, he found several thousand citizens already gathering outside in answer to the Dauphin's summons. They were carrying banners inscribed with the word 'Peace'. Towards the end of the morning the Dauphin, wearing a tunic with the arms of France over his armour, rode out of the gates of the Hôtel-Neuf. John had no choice but to join him. Flanked by the Duke of Burgundy and the aged Duke of Berry, the Dauphin rode west. They were followed by the Provost of the Merchants and a cheering mass of armed citizens. They flowed like an incoming tide through the streets and along the strand of the Seine. They passed the Maison aux Piliers by and swept on to the Louvre. Taking possession of the fortress, they released the Duke of Bar and the Duke of Bavaria. Then, crossing the bridges of the Seine, they opened up the Conciergerie and released the prisoners there. Meanwhile armed loyalists had begun to fill the Place de Grève and mix with the Cabochians. Someone called on those who were for peace to stand to the right and all who wanted war to the left. It was clear that the great majority were for peace. Almost all of the men posted by the Cabochians in the square abandoned the cause and moved to the right with the rest. Inside the barricaded building Chaumont and Caboche lost their nerve. They filed out pretending to join the crowd and then fled away into the warren of side streets.

As soon as the Dauphin recovered possession of the capital the order went out to arrest the leaders of the failed revolution. Search parties hunted them down through the night. Most had already vanished. Thomas Legoix and his sons, the Saint-Yons and the other kings of the Grande Boucherie fled the city, followed by the lowly *écorcheurs* Chaumont and Caboche. Their accomplices in the administration, the King's secretary Guillaume Barraut and the Chancellor Eustache de Laitre, vanished with them. Jean de Troyes made off as the mob sacked his house and carried away his furniture. Most of the fugitives made for Burgundy, to the protection of John the Fearless's officers.[39]

The violent culmination of the Cabochian revolution was a disaster for John the Fearless. Forced to negotiate peace with the Armagnac princes in July, he might still have salvaged something of

his political power in the course of the horse-trading that was expected to follow their return to Paris. His Parisian allies would have been protected by the amnesty for which the treaty provided. They would have remained in the city, a latent threat to his enemies which John knew how to use to good effect. As it was, the doomed rising of the Cabochians enabled the Dauphin to destroy them. Their work was undone within days. More than thirty special commissions by which the Cabochians and their allies had imposed their will on the city and the government over the past six months were abolished. Their supporters were systematically removed from the jobs that they had been given in the royal households and in the administration. The Duke of Burgundy was dismissed as captain of the Bastille and replaced by Louis of Bavaria. The Louvre was put into the hands of the Duke of Bar. Jean de Troyes was removed as captain of the Hôtel Saint-Pol. The Duke of Berry, now hardly more than a symbol, was reinstated as Captain of Paris. Three of the four *échevins* of Paris were sacked. The purge left the Duke of Burgundy dangerously exposed when the Dauphin began to move against his intimates. Jean de Nielles, the man who had justified the murder of Louis of Orléans at Chartres and had been twice forced on the Dauphin as his chancellor, was dismissed and replaced by Jean Jouvenel. Several of John's councillors were arrested or fled. The King had already invited the leaders of the Armagnac coalition to return to Paris and Charles of Orléans was gathering a small army on the Loire to accompany them. Once they were in possession of the capital John would be defenceless in the midst of his enemies.[40]

Within a fortnight of the suppression of the revolution the Duke of Burgundy's position in the capital had become untenable. His servants reported that the Hôtel de Bourgogne was being watched by armed men. He believed that his own arrest was only a matter of time. In desperation, on 23 August, he tried a last throw. He persuaded Charles VI, who was only dimly conscious of what was happening, to come hawking with him in the Bois de Vincennes. He seems to have intended to bolt north into Artois taking the King with him. A company of men-at-arms had been posted to guard the bridge over the Oise at Pont-Sainte-Maxence in order to secure their escape route and block any pursuit. It was the Dauphin's new chancellor Jean Jouvenel who, finding the King gone from his apartments, raised the alarm. Jouvenel rode after him with a posse of mounted men while Louis of Bavaria took another company to the bridge of Charenton to stop them escaping over the Seine. They caught up with the King in the woods near Vincennes and took him back to Paris. 'I am only taking the King hawking,' John protested. 'You are taking him hawking too far,' Jouvenel replied. John did

not return to the city with Jouvenel and the King. He rode straight for Pont-Sainte-Maxence with only the handful of men he had around him. From there he made for Lille. He would not enter Paris again for nearly five years.[41]

On 31 August 1413, a week after the flight of the Duke of Burgundy from Paris, Charles of Orléans entered the city by the Porte Saint-Jacques. He was accompanied by his brother Philip, the Dukes of Anjou and Bourbon and the Count of Alençon. They were received at the gate to the sound of trumpets by the Duke of Berry, the Provost of the Merchants, the new Chancellor of France and a crowd of citizens wearing specially designed liveries bearing the motto *'Le droit chemin'* ('the straight way'). The Armagnac leaders rode in triumph through the streets preceded by a man on horseback flinging fistfuls of coins into the crowds to keep them cheering. By the end of September they had been joined in the capital by Charles d'Albret and Clignet de Bréban and by the Count of Armagnac with a large troop of Gascon soldiers.[42]

One of the Dauphin's first acts after receiving Charles of Orléans at the Hôtel Saint-Pol was to prevail upon him to stop wearing mourning in public. Charles may have put away his mourning clothes, but he did not compromise or forgive. Neither did his friends and allies. The royal council was purged of all the Duke of Burgundy's friends. They were replaced by a solidly Armagnac body, united by the tumults of the past four years. Almost every one of them had been an ally or retainer of Louis of Orléans at the time of his death. At their first meeting, on 2 September, the new council resolved upon a wholesale reversal of all the policies with which John the Fearless had been associated. Three days later, on 5 September, there was another *lit de justice* in the Parlement at which the King repealed the *Ordonnance Cabochienne* in its entirety. A copy of the ordinance was produced before the assembled notables and solemnly torn to shreds by the clerk. Some of the King's advisers who had never been supporters of the Duke of Burgundy or the Cabochians regretted this indiscriminate reversal of the boldest programme of reform to be attempted in France for more than a century and a half. But they were silenced by the triumphant Armagnac princes. The ordinance was too potent a symbol of a discredited regime. It had disturbed too many vested interests. All royal letters prejudicial to the interests of the princes were revoked. The princes and their followers were reinstated in all their former honours and dignities and their confiscated property restored to them. Pierre Gentien, the former Provost of the Merchants of Paris, recovered his position. Jean de Hangest returned as Master of the Royal Archers, and Clignet de Bréban as Admiral of France. Albret

was reappointed as Constable and entered Paris in state, but with his own sword borne before him instead of the sword of office, which was still in the possession of the Burgundian pretender the Count of Saint-Pol. The Duke of Berry was restored to the lieutenancy of Languedoc whose duties he had never been capable of performing. All the corrupt creatures of the princes returned to their old posts in the Chambre des Comptes and the administration of the *aides* and the royal demesne. Outside the capital twenty-four *baillis* and seneschals were sacked over the following months and replaced by friends of the new regime. 'Not one royal officer was left who had been appointed by the Duke of Burgundy,' the contemporary chronicler of Paris complained. Several dozen prominent Parisians associated with the Duke of Burgundy were banished from the realm and some 300 others expelled from the city.[43]

Alongside the panoply of measures designed to eliminate the influence of John the Fearless in government, there was a symbolic repudiation of the man himself. His enemies, who had been persecuted and judicially murdered by his orders, were vindicated. The corpses of Pierre des Essarts, Jacques de la Rivière and Colin de Puiseux (who had betrayed the bridge of Saint-Cloud to the Armagnacs in 1411) were taken down from the public gibbet at Montfaucon and restored to their families. On 4 September the court assembled in the Palace on the Cité to hear Jean Gerson, now emerged from his hiding place in the cathedral, preach a bitter, triumphalist sermon in which he poured all the anathemas of the Church's teaching and his own learning on the tyranny which they had just endured. 'To forgive an enemy bent on one's destruction is not true pity,' he said, 'but a silly and cruel folly.' The University, over the years the closest political ally of the Duke of Burgundy, lost no time in ingratiating itself with the new order. Urged on by Gerson, a meeting of the faculties in the Bernardine church declared Jean Petit's treatise to be heretical. Shortly afterwards it was condemned by a council of the diocese of Paris and burned by the executioner in front of Notre-Dame. The rejection of the Duke's legacy extended even to the next generation. The betrothal of John's daughter Catherine to the heir of Louis of Anjou was cancelled although she had been living in her future father-in-law's household for the past two years. She was unceremoniously packed off with her trousseau to her father in Flanders, a mortal insult which John never forgave.[44]

From the Dauphin's point of view the triumph of the Armagnacs was too complete. He and his small circle of advisers were no more willing to be the puppets of the Armagnac princes than of the Duke

of Burgundy or the Cabochians. They would have preferred a compromise peace under which all the royal princes could work together in the King's council, as they had done by and large in the time of Philip the Bold. He seems to have taken the pragmatic view, shared by the Duke of Berry and many of the top officials of the *grands corps*, that however outrageous the murder of Louis of Orléans it would have to be forgotten in the interests of civil peace. But they were marginalised by the great tide of incoming Armagnac councillors. The new men had little patience with his attempts at moderation. In a brutally symbolic assertion of power they removed the Dauphin's Marshal Tanneguy du Châtel from the critical office of royal Provost of Paris only a month after the Dauphin had put him there, replacing him with a creature of their own who could be relied upon to hold the capital in their interest.[45]

Notes

1
Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 726, v, 586–8; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 301; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 231–2; *Journ. B. Paris*, 66–7.

2
Itin. Jean, 393; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 724, 728; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 305; *Journ. B. Paris*, 27. Berry: Lehoux (1966–8), iii, 510; AD Côte d'Or B11893 (28 Nov. 1412).

3
Ord., x, 24, 27, 34–8, 39, 46, 48, 58; 'Remontrances Univ.', 432; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 303, 306–7; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 88–95 105–6; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 768–70; Demurger, 170; Rey, ii, 123, 519n^{5}, 605.

4
Rey, ii, 427; Schnerb (2007 [1]), 284–6; Plancher, iii, 365. Estates: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 734; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 306–7; Salmon, 'Lamentacions', 101.

5
Coville (1888), 159; 'Geste des nobles', 145; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 734, 736–8; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 247; 'Rapport … doléances', 281; 'Correspondance … Paris', 60.

6
'Rapport … doléances', 281–8; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 738, 742–4; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 248; *Cat. Arch. Joursanvault*, no. 80.

7
Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 738–42, 744. Gentien and Petit: see *Auctarium Chartul. U. Paris*, iv, no. 2012.

8
'Remontrances': *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 766–8. Pavilly: Guillebert de Metz, 'Description', 233; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 252.

9
Commission: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 4; *Ord. Cabochienne*, 3–4; Coville (1888), 214–16; Famiglietti, 264n^{19}. Proscriptions: *Ord.*, x, 59–60; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 333, 343; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* v, 2–4.

10

Anjou: Cagny, *Chron.*, 80–1; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 768–70; *Choix de pièces*, i, 359–62. Essarts: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 333; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 6. Gentien: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 8; *Journ. B. Par.*, 178 (16 Mar., see AN KK1009, fol. 1).

11

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 334–5; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, iv, 768, v, 2; *Journ. B. Paris*, 27–8. Clerk: Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 128.

12

BN Coll. Bourgogne 55, fol. 30–32vo (great council); *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 10.

13

'Correspondance … Paris', 61–2; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* v, 6–10, 24; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 333, 343–4, 346; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 77. Council: *Itin. Jean*, 398.

14

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 10–16; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 108; 'Quelques textes', 161–2 (participants). Barraut's wife: AN JJ 168, fol. 64; AD Nord 1894, fol. 251vo.

15

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 16–24; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 108–9; *Foed.*, ix, 52; 'Quelques textes', 161–3; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 344–6, 355; *Itin. Jean*, 398; *Journ. B. Paris*, 30. Topography. Sauval, ii, 65; Favier (1974), 105.

16

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 22–6, 32–6; *Journ. B. Paris*, 31; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 346, 347, 361; *Cat. Arch. Joursanvault*, no. 114.

17

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 26–30, 34–6, 124; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 77; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 253; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 109–10; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 350. Bridges: *Journ. B. Paris*, 30n^{2}. Bastille: BN Fr. 20684, p. 41; Pocquet (1939 [3]), no. 80.

18

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 351–5; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 38–46; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 112–14; *Foed.*, ix, 52; 'Quelques textes', 163–4; *Journ. B. Paris*, 29–30. Topography: Sauval, ii, 275–84; Bournon (1879), 94–107.

19

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 48–50, 58–60; *Ord.*, x, 68–70; *Foed.*, ix, 53 ('lethal threats'); Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 128.

20

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 52; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 114–16; *Ord. Cabochienne*.

21

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 355, 370–1; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 32, 54–8, 74–6; 'Quelques textes', 164; *Foed.*, iv, 53; *Journ. B. Paris*, 31–4; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 86–7; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 116.

22

Pisan, *Livre de la paix*, 89, 131. Wine: AD Côte d'Or B1756, fol. 193–195vo.

23

Gerson, *Oeuvres*, vii, 1007, 1030. Cf. Jean de Montreuil, *Opera*, i (1), 349–50 (Ep. 215); Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 249, 251; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 26; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 355–6.

24

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 78–80, 144; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 361–2, 374–6; 'Doc. inéd. insurrection', 38; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 257–8.

25

*Plancher, iii, no. 281.

26
Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 251–3.

27
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 64–6; *Reg. St Jean d'Angély*, iii, 61–3; 'Petite chron. Périgueux', 431; 'Petite chron. Guyenne', no. 88; 'Doc. inéd. Insurrection', 39. Talmont: *Reg. Jurade*, ii, 34–5. Montendre: *Cagny, *Chron.*, 72n[1]; *Reg. Jurade*, ii, 60. Numbers: *Proc. PC*, ii, 129; *Foed.*, ix, 29; PRO E364/48, m. 1.

28
Vaissète, ix, 1019–21, *x, 1963; BN Fr. n.a. 23634/162, 179, 182, 218, 206, 236, etc.; *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 876; *Cagny, *Chron.*, 72n[1] (Heilly's report of 27 July). On Barbazan: Gonzalez, App. 26–9; BN Fr. 5061, fol. 115; 'Geste des nobles', 141; *Lacour (1934 [1]), 54. On Torsay: Gonzalez, App. 210–11; *Lacour (1934 [1]), 62; *Gall. Reg.*, iv, no. 17599.

29
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 60–4, 66; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 254–5; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 618; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 45–6; *CPR 1413–16*, 410.

30
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 34, 38–40; 'Geste des nobles', 147–8; BN Fr. 6211/150, 151; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 362, 372–3, 391; *Ord.*, x, 147–50; 'Doc. inéd. insurrection', 38; Cagny, *Chron.*, 80, 82–3; *Cat. Arch. Joursanvault*, no. 111. Berry/Auvergne: BN Coll. Bourgogne 55, fols 84, 86.

31
Comptes E. Bourg., i, no. 616; BN Coll. Bourgogne 58, fol. 139; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 118–22; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 80, 82, 86–8; 'Correspondance … Paris', 66. John gave a dinner for Berry on 6 July: *Itin. Jean*, 400.

32
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 86, 88–94, 146; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 141, 142; *Foed.*, ix 52–3; 'Quelques textes', 164–5.

33
Itin. Jean, 400; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 94–120; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 387–90; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 122–4.

34
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 120; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 259; 'Correspondance … Paris', 66.

35
Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 259–60; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 120–2; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 124; 'Correspondance … Paris', 66–7.

36
Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 260–1; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 124–5; 'Correspondance … Paris', 66–7.

37
Journ. B. Paris, 40–2; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 262–3; *Gall. Reg.*, iv, no. 16485–6.

38
A. Mirot, 371–5, 379–84.

39
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 122–32; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 261–3; *Journ. B. Paris*, 36–40; 'Geste des nobles', 149–50; 'Correspondance … Paris', 67–8; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 125–6, 127–9; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 398–400; 'Quelques textes', 166. Fugitives: AD Côte d'Or B1576, fols 138vo–139vo; BN Coll. Bourgogne 56, fol. 113.

40
Journ. B. Paris, 41–3; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 142–6, 158, 212–14; Jouvenel,

Hist., 262–3; *Gall. Reg.*, iv, nos 16978–9 (Bastille); AN X1a 4791, fols 22, 25 (H. St-Pol); AN KK1009, fol. 1vo (*échevins*). Armagnac army: BN Fr. n.a. 20028/101.

41

Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 263; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 218–19; *Plancher, iii, no. 290; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 148, 166; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 400–2; Cagny, *Chron.*, 84–5; *Itin. Jean*, 400. Pont-Ste-Maxence: AD Côte d'Or B1576, fol. 268.

42

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 148–50; 'Geste des nobles', 150; *Foed.*, ix, 54; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 411.

43

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 148–58; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 138–43, 306; *Mon. hist.*, no. 1898; *Ord.*, x, 167–77; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 406–7, 409; *Journ. B. Paris*, 46. Offices: Valois (1888), 133–7; BN Fr. 21405/58; *Vaissète, x, 1972–5; Demurger, 171–3. Banishments: *Choix de pièces*, i, 367–9.

44

Journ. B. Paris, 44; Gerson, *Oeuvres*, vii, no. 389, esp. at 1007 (quotation); *Auctarium Chartul. U. Paris*, iv, nos 1989–90, 2000, 2015–17; Coville (1932), 433–501; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 170–1; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 461–2; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 160; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 267; *Extr. comptes R. Réné*, no. 536.

45

Gall. Reg., iv, no. 16487. On his successor (André Marchand), Demurger, 273–4.

CHAPTER IX

Henry V, 1413–1414

Henry V had been crowned as King of England on 9 April 1413 in the midst of an unseasonal snowstorm. As with other successful warriors, his personality has been almost entirely masked by the uncritical adulation of contemporaries and the nostalgia of a later generation which lived to see his achievements undone. The new King was twenty-six years old at his accession. He was an intelligent and unscrupulous politician in the full force of his age, endowed with an iron determination, a remarkable capacity for work and a great deal more experience of war and government than most newly crowned monarchs. Shakespeare's narrative of a wild youth, abruptly renounced on his accession to the throne, is broadly borne out by his contemporaries. He became a new man, says the St Albans chronicler Thomas Walsingham, 'dedicated to honour, propriety and dignity'. There are glimpses of the private man which suggest that he remained a companionable friend, an accomplished musician and composer, an occasional gambler and a patron of poets. But the truth is that we know very little about Henry's personal life, for he deliberately concealed it from all but his most intimate companions by a forbidding public presence. He would rebuke even notable captains for looking him in the face when talking to him. He had a severe and rather taciturn manner, an imperious way with those who crossed him and a certain prim rectitude. Two years into his reign Richard Courtenay Bishop of Norwich told a French diplomat that Henry was a man of 'beautiful and noble manners … and high personal standards', adding that he did not think that he had slept with a woman since his coronation. After a week of audiences with the English King, Courtenay's interlocutor had his own thoughts, which he kept to himself. He thought Henry 'fitter to be a priest than a soldier'.[1]

Henry's accession marked the arrival in power of a remarkable group of men. Two of his three brothers, Thomas Duke of Clarencee… and John Duke of Bedford, were notable soldiers. Clarence had already distinguished himself in the fighting at sea and in France. In spite of the tense relations between the two brothers in their father's time he was a conspicuously loyal adjutant until his death in battle a few months before Henry's. The Duke of

Bedford, in some ways the most interesting of the brothers, had been one of the wardens of the north for the past decade and had shown himself to be a talented captain and administrator with an austere personality and a deliberateness of judgment which must have reminded many people of Henry himself. The third brother, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, who is best known for his patronage of learning, had neither the military dash nor the administrative talents of his siblings and was to prove a disruptive force in the next reign, but he was a loyal and competent subordinate in his brother's lifetime. In addition there were the King's Beaufort uncles, born of John of Gaunt's irregular relationship with Katherine Swynford. Thomas Beaufort, Earl of Dorset and later Duke of Exeter, was another formidable soldier who had served as Admiral of England and Lieutenant in Aquitaine. According to a Gascon observer in England Henry was close to Dorset and 'much guided by his advice'. Henry Beaufort, the ambitious Bishop of Winchester, was the richest ecclesiastic in England and over the years became one of his nephew's chief political and financial supporters. Many of these men had been Henry's collaborators during the Welsh wars and in the four years between 1407 and 1411 when he had served as his father's viceroy. The new king lost no time in demonstrating that his own reign would be different from his father's. He dispensed with his father's ministers, starting with Archbishop Arundel and Chief Justice Gascoigne, whom he disliked and blamed for his estrangement from his father in his final years. Bishop Beaufort became Chancellor. All the principal household officers were replaced. Critical military commands were conferred on the Earls of Arundel and Warwick, perhaps his closest friends beyond his immediate family. Henry's Chamberlain Hugh Mortimer and the two experienced diplomats, Henry Chichele Bishop of St David's and Thomas Langley Bishop of Durham, became his chief foreign policy advisers.[2]

Himself a man of conventional lights, Henry V was determined to live out the role assigned to him by contemporary ideals of kingship. After more than four decades of military, diplomatic and financial failure the authority of the Crown had suffered in England, just as it had for different reasons in France. The wounds provoked by the revolution of 1399 were still raw and the ghost of the murdered King Richard continued to haunt his successors. A French herald who attended Henry's coronation returned home with reports that not everyone in England approved of Henry's accession. There was audible muttering from those who thought that the crown should have passed to Edmund Mortimer Earl of March. Henry's first act after his coronation was to offer a general amnesty to all

those who had participated in the rebellions of his father's reign. Later he had Richard's remains brought from the Dominican church at Langley and splendidly re-interred in the tomb in Westminster Abbey that the dead man had commissioned for himself in his lifetime. Henry, who had passed the formative period of his youth at Richard II's court, had warmer memories of him than his father ever had. But the new obsequies for a discredited ruler were more than a personal gesture. They were an act of atonement, an offer of reconciliation and perhaps also an attempt to silence the persistent popular rumours that Richard was still alive.[3]

They were also part of an attempt to stamp the new reign with an aura of legitimacy which Henry IV had never enjoyed. The new king was profoundly conscious of his dynasty's uncertain claim on power and the fickleness of his subjects' allegiance. He had passed much of his father's reign fighting the supporters of Owen Glendower in Wales. In 1403 had fought a battle against Hotspur and the Earl of Worcester, the one his former lieutenant in Wales and the other his old tutor and protector. Henry had experienced treachery at first hand. Such memories endure. Throughout his reign he claimed divine approval for his acts after the treasons, misfortunes and physical debility of his father's declining years, which many had seen as God's curse upon his line.

The Frenchman who thought that he behaved like a priest had perceived something more important than he realised. Henry was a man of strong and above all public piety. As Prince of Wales he had presided at the burning of the Lollard tailor John Badby at Smithfield in 1410 and as King he continued to associate himself publicly with the persecution of Lollardy. He surrounded himself with ecclesiastics and learned men, many of whom held important positions in his government. He played a prominent part in the healing of the papal schism. He founded the Carthusian monastery at Sheen as an annexe of his new palace on the Thames at Richmond, as well as the Bridgettine convent of Syon on the opposite bank of the river, the last monastic foundations in England before the Reformation. He maintained a magnificent chapel and a large corps of chaplains and choristers, who accompanied him on his campaigns. He composed religious music including a *Gloria* and a *Sanctus* which found their way into the Old Hall Manuscript, one of the earliest surviving books of English sacred music. Henry's religious sentiments were completely sincere and his attachment to traditional models of spiritual authority was certainly genuine. But he was well aware of the propaganda advantages of presenting himself as the agent of God's will in a world of spiritual doubt and political insecurity.

The same concern about the dynasty's uncertain title to the throne was probably the main factor behind the aggressive foreign policy pursued by Henry V from the outset of his reign. It also accounted for the strong religious theme in the King's public pronouncements on the subject. Henry constantly presented his claims against the French as an appeal to God against the wickedness and unworthiness of England's traditional enemy. It is easy for a post-Enlightenment world to dismiss this as sanctimonious humbug. But it was not a charge made by contemporaries on either side of the Channel. The contemporary chronicler of Saint-Denis, whose work comes close to being an official history of the French royal house, openly admired Henry's public religiosity and compared it unfavourably with the vices of the royal and princely courts of France. He saw in Henry the model king for which France had yearned since the time of Charles V and Louis IX: handsome, authoritative, devout, wise, just, a man of few words, bold in action and regal in manner. He had 'the bearing of a king'. We cannot know how many Frenchmen agreed with this but it is plain that many did. For Henry V and his contemporaries, success in war was a badge of legitimacy, a judgment of God on the victor's worth and perhaps also on the sins of the vanquished.[4]

The famous victories of Edward III exercised the same fascination for Henry as they did for all of Edward's successors right up to the seventeenth century. The treaty of Brétigny of 1360, which had transferred about a third of France to Edward III in full sovereignty, had marked the high point of his years of triumph, the benchmark of England's territorial ambitions. Its repudiation by France in 1369 remained an open sore. In a circular prepared five years into his reign for propaganda purposes, Henry claimed that he would have settled for the Brétigny terms. It was true that he had claimed much more: the crown of France and the French domains of the Angevin kings of the twelfth century. But 'for the sake of peace had been willing to content himself with a modest part of what was rightfully his, namely the lands which his great-grandfather King Edward of noble memory enjoyed under the treaty with John his enemy of France, and his eldest son Charles'. Edward III's success had been due in large measure to the internal divisions of France and the implosion of the French state in the 1350s, conditions which seemed to have returned in the years after the murder of Louis of Orléans. The opportunity to settle the ancient dispute in England's favour was hard to resist. The extraordinary territorial concessions which the Armagnacs in their extremity had been willing to make to Henry IV in May 1412 had shown the English what might be gained by intervening in the French civil war. The fortunes made by the

Duke of Clarence and his captains in a campaign in which no battle had been fought or walled place captured had opened the eyes of England's military nobility to prospects of booty that had not been seen for a generation. Henry had been against his father's alliance with the Armagnacs but only because he would have preferred to do a deal with the Duke of Burgundy. No one can have been surprised that one of the first diplomatic missions to appear at Westminster after Henry's coronation was an embassy from John the Fearless.[5]

The intense diplomatic activity of Henry V's first two years was affected at every point by the political divisions of France. The objective of the Duke of Burgundy's first embassy was to detach the new king from the Armagnac alliance concluded by his father and to propose a new league with both the Duke of Burgundy personally and the King of France, whose government the Duke still controlled. The logic of this proposal was obvious and it is clear that it was welcomed at Westminster. Negotiations were opened. Draft articles of agreement were prepared. At the end of July 1413 an embassy left London to continue the discussions in Paris. It was a very grand affair. It included Henry Chichele Bishop of St David's, Richard Beauchamp Earl of Warwick and Henry lord Scrope, all close friends and collaborators of the English King whose presence was a measure of the importance that he attached to their mission. They were escorted to France by some 200 gentlemen and officials, not to speak of grooms, clerks and servants. But the cavalcade never reached Paris. By the time that the ambassadors crossed the Channel the French capital was in the last spasms of the Cabochian revolution. Chichele and his companions had to kick their heels in Calais until the negotiations were eventually transferred to the church of Leulinghem at the edge of the Calais pale, the last time that this bleak but traditional meeting place would be used for a major Anglo-French conference. The French delegation which arrived to represent Charles VI at the end of the August 1413 had been nominated by the Duke of Burgundy, one of his last acts before his flight from Paris. It was led by the Duke's councillor Jean de Thoisy Bishop of Tournai and filled with his partisans. The atmosphere was sour from the outset. The English began by reserving their claim to the Crown of France. The French recounted all the old legal and historical arguments against it. The English complained about the French repudiation of the treaty of Brétigny. The French replied that it was the English who had repudiated it and recited all the old quarrels of the 1360s. The English delegation's real purpose was to reinstate the Anglo-French truces. But after this poisonous opening there proved to be little common ground even on that subject. The English called for an extension of

the long truce of 1396. The French said that their instructions were limited to discussing breaches of the successive stopgap truces agreed during the reign of Henry IV. The delegates then fell to arguing about the language of the conference, a persistent theme of such occasions for years to come. The French insisted on French. The English pretended that they did not understand it and demanded the use of Latin instead. These sterile wrangles were shortly interrupted by the news of the Duke of Burgundy's precipitate flight from Paris, followed by the dismissal of all the French royal councillors participating in the conference. After a few days of confusion the discussions were abandoned.[6]

Anxious to salvage what they could Chichele and Warwick made contact with John the Fearless in Flanders. Unable to deal with him as the ruler of France, they wanted at least to discover what he had to offer them as a party leader. It proved to be very little. John's loss of power in Paris made him keener on cutting a deal with the English but also meant that he had less to give them in return. His dilemma, now as ever, was that the English were valuable but dangerous allies. As long as he had any prospect of manoeuvring his way back into power in Paris he could not afford to do anything that would cost him political support there. On 15 September 1413 he received the English ambassadors at Bruges. They were locked in discussion for four days. After the Englishmen had returned to Calais for instructions negotiations resumed in October at Saint-Omer and then at Lille. John offered them an alliance with his own house to be sealed by the English King's marriage to one of his daughters. But the English were looking for more than a dowry. The talks got nowhere.[7]

Charles VI's new Armagnac ministers were equally unforthcoming. When Charles of Orléans entered Paris in triumph on 31 August one of his companions was the English King's cousin Edward Duke of York. He had been serving with the Earl of Dorset in Gascony and visited Charles at Orléans before accompanying him to Paris on his way home. Edward's presence at Charles's side was a visible symbol of the friendship sealed in London in 1412. The Armagnac alliance had survived its formal renunciation by the Armagnac princes in the aftermath of the peace of Auxerre. But it had no future. Now that the Armagnacs were in power their alliance with the English was a redundant embarrassment. Edward of York stayed on in the French capital for three months. He was graciously received and splendidly entertained. But if, as his hosts suspected, he had come to observe the political situation he can have been under no illusions about its implications. The French King's council was keen to reinstate the truce with England and to stop the English

King making a deal with the Duke of Burgundy. To obstruct the marriage negotiations which they knew were in progress in Flanders they were prepared to dangle before him the prospect of marrying Catherine of France, the only available daughter of Charles VI. The thirteen-year-old princess was paraded before the Duke of York dressed from head to toe in gold cloth and silk, festooned with jewellery and surrounded by maids of honour in order to impress him with her grace, health and beauty. But the Armagnac ministers had no intention of making large concessions to Henry V. One of their first acts was to send the Duke of Bourbon to the Gascon march to expel the English from the parts of Saintonge and Poitou that had been conquered with their tacit (and in some cases active) support earlier in the year. Bourbon had been party to the agreement of May 1412 with Henry IV but when the English garrison of Soubise sent a parlementaire before him to remind him of the fact he brushed the objection aside. On 22 November he took the place by assault and sacked it. Edward was still in Paris when the news was received there with bells and processions and a complacent sermon in the church of St Germain l'Auxerrois about the benefits of domestic peace.[8]

The Duke of York, who counted the Armagnac leaders as his friends, was responsible for the first direct contacts between France's new government and the English court. At the beginning of October 1413, while Chichele and Warwick were in Flanders, Henry V agreed to receive a high-powered French embassy. It was to be a 'solemn' embassy of a kind which had not visited England from France since the reign of Richard II. Its leaders were three men who would be closely concerned with the French government's deteriorating relations with England over the next eighteen months: Jean de Berry's Chancellor, Guillaume de Boisratier Archbishop of Bourges, the Constable Charles d'Albret and the King's diplomatic secretary Gontier Col. Col was the humblest member of the embassy but in some ways the most important. Then in his early sixties, he was a learned man and an exquisite Latinist, who had once described himself as 'loyal, able and expert in the work of embassies, having participated in many of them to England, Italy, Germany and elsewhere'. He was perhaps the nearest thing that the French government had to a professional diplomat. He owed his career to the Duke of Berry and, like many senior civil servants in the same position, he had suffered at the hands of the Cabochians for his loyalty to old friends.[9]

The French embassy travelled to England with the Duke of York. They arrived at Westminster on 6 December 1413 to find the air heavy with rumours of imminent rebellion. Sir John Oldcastle, an

important Kent landowner and former friend of Henry V, had escaped from the Tower of London at the end of October after being convicted of Lollardy by an ecclesiastical court. From his hiding place in a parchment-maker's house in Clerkenwell Oldcastle planned a mass uprising in London by a reported 20,000 men including a core of Lollard sympathisers and a much larger number of disparate malcontents. Posters and pamphlets appeared across England calling on men to rise up to destroy the monarchy and the Church. Some took these millenarian projects at face value. Others hoped for riches beyond their rank. Oldcastle himself is said to have planned to make himself ruler of England. The rising was a fiasco. A plot to murder the King and his brothers during a theatrical performance at Eltham Palace on Twelfth Night was frustrated. The handful of men who made their way to the appointed meeting place at St Giles's Field outside London on the night of 9–10 January were disarmed and arrested as they arrived. The macabre succession of executions at Newgate and St Giles over the following days and the manhunt for Oldcastle, who had escaped in the confusion, all served to magnify the sense of menace surrounding this hopeless enterprise. To the French ambassadors, who had accompanied Henry's court throughout the crisis, the whole affair must have confirmed England's reputation for endemic rebellion and political violence at the very moment that they believed that the divisions of France were behind them.[10]

The talks in London were almost as difficult as those at the abortive conference at Leulinghem the year before. There were fresh arguments about whether to use Latin ('the common language') or French ('as is customary among our great men'). The French returned to the question of a marriage between Henry and Catherine of France, which they believed offered the best prospect of a lasting peace. But Henry V was not going to make the mistake that Richard II had made in 1396 by allowing the French to buy peace cheaply. His councillors made it clear that they regarded the marriage alliance as an occasion for settling old territorial claims. Without that, they said, there was no possibility of agreement. The French were dismayed. Their instructions did not extend to discussing territorial concessions. So, after a fortnight of fruitless negotiation, it was agreed that the French would return to Paris accompanied by another English embassy to pursue the matter there. In the meantime Henry V undertook not to commit himself to any other bride until at least 1 May. A truce between the two countries was agreed (in both languages) for a year until 2 February 1415. It is hard to escape the impression that for all their internal problems the French did not yet take Henry V or his kingdom

seriously. Years later the King would refer to the disdain (*'frequens irrisio'*) that his early ambassadors had encountered. Like other English leaders before him he felt patronised by the grandeur of the French royal family and resented it. The story of the tennis balls, supposedly sent to Henry V by the Dauphin with a message that he would do better to amuse himself at home than meddle in France, was not just a conceit of Shakespeare's. Variants of it circulated in Henry's lifetime. It is a fable, but like many fables it embodied a symbolic truth.[11]

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John the Fearless never accepted his expulsion from the government and capital of France. His first reaction to the Armagnac takeover in Paris had been to protest his good intentions and to try to negotiate his way back to power. This was hardly realistic. The bishop whom he sent to Paris was reported to have performed his office with 'truly Ciceronian eloquence' but received no response other than a frigid greeting and a promise that the King's answer would be made known in due course. The answer when it came was that John should surrender the small number of royal castles still in his custody, swear to observe the peace of Pontoise and drop any discussions with the English. Charles VI's emissaries delivered this message to the Duke at Lille on 5 November 1413. He heard them out in silence. Then he called for his horses and without uttering another word rode away. The breach was complete.[12]

Very shortly after this interview reports began to reach Paris that John was plotting a rising by his friends in Paris and was planning to march on the city with an army. The Duke denied it. But the reports were true. On 7 December 1413 he arrived at Antwerp for a six-day conference with his kinsmen, allies and military commanders. He brought with him a letter purporting to come from the Dauphin, calling on him to come urgently to Paris with an army. This was followed by two more such letters, each more insistent than the last. At about Christmas-time the Duke issued a manifesto declaring that the Queen and the Dauphin were both prisoners in the Louvre and that he had received letters written in the Dauphin's own hand, sealed with his seal, calling on him to rescue them. While copies of this document did the rounds of the towns of France, summonses were despatched to John's military retainers calling on them to muster on the Somme to 'deliver my lord and son the Duke of Guyenne from his servitude'.[13]

The origin of these mysterious letters of the Dauphin is obscure. They are not consistent with Louis of Guyenne's known views. There is no reliable evidence that either he or the Queen was being

constrained or needed rescuing. The versions in circulation were certified copies and no originals in Louis' hand or sealed with his seal have ever been found. Much the most plausible explanation is that John the Fearless forged them. However, they caused consternation in Paris when John's manifesto reached the city. Charles VI had been 'absent' since before Christmas and in his place the Queen had assumed the dominant role in government. On 9 January 1414 she presided at a tense meeting of the council in the Louvre. The Dauphin, the Chancellor and most of the Armagnac princes were present. They were joined by representatives of the University and city. The Chancellor, who evidently believed that the letters were genuine, denounced the Dauphin to his face for his idleness, frivolity and susceptibility to ill-intentioned advisers. Louis denied having written the letters. The rest did not know what to believe. What was clear was that there were still several Burgundian sympathisers in the Dauphin's household whom he counted as his friends. They included one of John's chamberlains, David de Brimeu, and Jean de Croy, the teenage son of one of John's most intimate councillors. The meeting concluded that if Louis had really written to the Duke of Burgundy it must have been their doing. So a day or two later the Queen, having consulted the princes, entered the Dauphin's private apartments in the Louvre and ordered her attendants to arrest David de Brimeu, Jean de Croy and two other members of her son's household. Jean de Croy was imprisoned in the castle of Montlhéry. The other three were released on their undertaking never to come near the Dauphin again. The Dauphin was furious. But over the following days he calmed down and threw himself into the defence of the capital against the Duke. The *arrière-ban* had already been proclaimed. Troops were making their way to Paris from across northern France. The Duke of Bourbon was recalled from the Gascon march. Orders were given that all castles, bridges and fords on the approaches to Paris were to be held against John the Fearless's army. Meanwhile the Dauphin publicly repudiated the letters and addressed a peremptory letter to his father-in-law ordering him to disband his army and stay away from the city.[14]

The Duke of Burgundy was unmoved. On 23 January 1414 he issued a fresh manifesto from Lille, reiterating all his old grievances about the persecution of his clients and allies. By this time his army was already gathering beneath the walls of the fortress of Bapaume, south of Arras. On 30 January he began his march south. Loyalties were confused, resistance chaotic and patchy. The captain of Péronne refused to let the Duke cross the Somme through the town. But at Eclusier, ten miles downstream, his officers talked their way

past the defenders of the bridge by producing the Dauphin's supposed letters. At Compiègne on the Oise the townsmen had resolved that they 'cared no more for one side than the other'. But when John the Fearless's brother Philip of Nevers appeared outside the town bearing copies of the letters they wavered. The King's officers and some of the richer citizens were for resisting. But they were overruled after an ill-tempered debate in a general assembly of the town. The townsmen of Senlis also summoned an assembly but they finally decided to shut the Duke's army out. Noyon opened its gates without objection, Soissons with enthusiasm. On the evening of 7 February the Duke of Burgundy reached Saint-Denis in the plain north of Paris. The guards at the gates said that they had been ordered to hold the place against him. But the citizens were having none of it. They wound down the drawbridge to let him in. Here the Duke of Burgundy established his headquarters. He now had an estimated 2,000 men-at-arms and about half that number of bowmen in addition to armed servants and pages, perhaps 5,000 men in all. On the following morning he sent his herald, Artois King of Arms, into Paris. The herald was admitted before the King's council. He announced that his master had come at the invitation of the Dauphin, who was being held as a prisoner, and that he intended to enter the city. He produced letters from the Duke addressed to the King, the Queen and the Dauphin explaining his actions. The council refused to receive them and sent him away. As the herald left his lodgings to return to Saint-Denis he was confronted in the street by the Count of Armagnac, who told him that the next herald that John sent into the city would lose his head.[15]

The Duke of Burgundy did not expect to take Paris by assault, still less to starve it out. He was counting on his supporters in the city to open the gates for him as the men of Compiègne, Soissons and Saint-Denis had done. The Armagnac leaders could count on the support of the more prosperous citizens after the terrifying experiences of the previous summer. But they were well aware that most of the population was still overtly hostile to them and would happily admit the Burgundians. This meant that the government had to devote a large part of its energy and resources to holding down an incipient rebellion at their backs. The Provost's sergeants patrolled the taverns looking for grumblers, malcontents and rabble-rousers. The local watch committees, purged of Burgundian sympathisers, listened out for trouble. The richer merchants were conscripted to keep order in the streets. The staff and councillors of the Chambre des Comptes rode from gate to gate in full armour. The Chancellor in person roamed the streets followed by a posse of

judges of the Parlement, grumbling that they were ‘men of law not used to going about armed or mounted on anything more than a mule’. The least sign of disaffection in the streets resulted in arrests and heavy fines. Even children caught singing ditties about the Duke of Burgundy were kicked and hit. There were fresh rounds of expulsions. The University, in spite of its unctuous obeisance to the new regime, was identified as a hotbed of covert Burgundian sentiment and many of its most prominent members received orders to leave the city within the day.[16]

The defence of Paris was entrusted to the Count of Armagnac under the nominal authority of the Dauphin. On 4 February 1414, as the Burgundians were crossing the Oise, the seventeen-year-old Louis of Guyenne, mounted on a warhorse and enclosed in shining steel armour, reviewed the military retinues of the Armagnac princes drawn up in ranks in the cemetery of Notre-Dame and assigned them their stations: the Dauphin himself at the Louvre, the Count of Armagnac at the Hôtel de Bourgogne, Charles of Orléans at Saint-Martin-des-Champs and the Duke of Anjou at the Bastille. The common people were ordered to stay at work and strictly forbidden to go anywhere near the walls or even to bear arms for fear that they would turn them against the defenders of the city. The council had it proclaimed at street crossings that any of them found armed without permission would be summarily hanged.[17]

On the morning of 10 February 1414 the whole Burgundian army appeared in battle order in the plain west of the city between the suburban villages of Montmartre and Chaillot. It was an impressive spectacle, reported the clerk of the Parlement, who had climbed to the top tower of the Palace to see it. Leaving his lines the Duke of Burgundy advanced with an escort of 400 men to the Porte Saint-Honoré, which led into the Louvre quarter. Artois King of Arms went forward with four knights to demand admittance. The guards sent them away and threatened to fire on them. Enguerrand de Bournonville, the captain of John’s escort, tried to speak to Louis de Bosredon who was in command of the gate. But Louis refused to answer and the Burgundian captain withdrew followed by a rain of crossbow bolts. The Duke stood before the gate for three hours, hoping that it would be opened for him by his allies. But it remained firmly closed. At about one o’clock he rode back to Saint-Denis. Here on the following day he issued a manifesto calling on all loyal subjects to liberate the King and the Dauphin. Copies were secreted into the city and appeared overnight, nailed to the doors of Notre-Dame and other prominent buildings. But security was too tight, and there was no rising. To make matters worse Charles VI recovered his wits while John was outside Paris. In the brief interval

before he relapsed again at the end of the month he appeared in public, attending a service of thanksgiving at Notre-Dame and giving the lie to suggestions that he was a prisoner of the Duke's enemies. He put his name to a number of acts which overtly took the part of the Armagnacs against the Duke of Burgundy. John's support began to drain away. He made a final effort to win over the Armagnac princes. Another herald appeared outside the Porte Saint-Antoine by the Bastille with letters for the Dukes of Berry, Anjou and Orléans. But the soldiers posted there would not receive them and the herald was obliged to leave them attached to a stick in the ground before riding off. On the night of 16 February, in the midst of a torrential downpour, the Duke of Burgundy burned his equipment and marched away with his army.[18]

John the Fearless had suffered a serious military reverse and an even more serious political humiliation. His supporters in Paris, who had expected him to fight his way in, felt betrayed. The news of his retreat was greeted with hoots of derision and abusive ditties in the streets. The Armagnac leaders took courage. On 17 February 1414 the criers passed through the streets of Paris proclaiming the Duke of Burgundy a traitor and a rebel and banishing him from the realm. All the property of his followers was confiscated. Over the following days these orders were distributed among the towns of France. In Paris the screw was tightened another turn. There were more arrests, banishments and executions. The royal Provost confiscated the street chains that had come to symbolise the power of the mob and had them taken away in carts to the Bastille and the Louvre. Every citizen was made to hand in his weapons.[19]

On 2 March 1414 the Queen and the Dauphin presided over a great council at the Hôtel Saint-Pol. All the Armagnac princes and captains were present. The meeting resolved upon a powerful counter-attack against the Duke of Burgundy in his own domains. The King was to be its nominal commander, notwithstanding his incapacity. The kernel of the army would be made up of the retinues of the Armagnac princes and the contingents raised in the provinces for the defence of Paris, which were now beginning to reach the capital. A *taille* of 600,000 *livres* was imposed to fund the cost. A hundred miles away in the fortress-city of Arras, John the Fearless was presiding over his own council. It was a grim occasion. It is clear that the debacle outside Paris had provoked some scepticism about the Dauphin's letters. John had to swear to their genuineness and call on two of his councillors to back him up with oaths of their own. Ultimately they had little choice but to support him. The letters were all that protected them from a charge of treason if they took up arms against the government. The Arras

assembly expected the government to invade Artois and Picardy and possibly Flanders as well. They resolved to stand on the defensive and fight.[20]

On 4 March 1414, two days after these bellicose decisions had been made in Paris and Arras, Henry V's ambassadors, Henry lord Scrope, Hugh Mortimer and the Welsh jurist Henry Ware, made their entry into Paris by the Porte Saint-Denis. They were received there with great ceremony. Every effort was made to impress them. But the negotiations were a failure like the discussions in London. The Englishmen had come to discuss the territorial concessions that might be made in return for a marriage alliance. But the attention of the French was on other things. They were more interested in the year-long truce which the Constable had brought back with him from London. That would at least ensure that for the moment the English stayed out of the French civil war. Charles VI ratified it with alacrity. But his ministers stalled on the question of territory. Although the ambassadors remained in the French capital until well into April they made no progress.[21] Their journey was not wasted, however. They looked around them. They could see the incapacity of the French King. They were able to observe the developing political crisis at first hand. They had travelled from Calais through the plain of Picardy as the army of John the Fearless retreated across it in the opposite direction and had witnessed the gathering of forces in the capital for the Armagnac counter-attack.

On 1 April 1414 Charles VI was well enough to receive the *Oriflamme* at the abbey of Saint-Denis. Two days later on the 3rd he marched north from Paris at the head of an army described at the time as 'large enough to conquer several barbarian nations'. With a payroll strength of 10,000 men-at-arms and 4,500 bowmen there must have been some 25,000 men altogether including pages, *gros varlets* and labourers. Apart from the Dukes of Berry and Anjou, who were left to hold Paris with a garrison of 800 men, all of the Armagnac princes were present with their followers. The Armagnacs' ability to raise an army of this size and impose the taxes required to pay for it was some indication of the support for their cause in the aftermath of the Cabochian revolution. Ultimately, however, their strength depended on their control of the royal family, the institutions of government and the provincial administrations. The King, the Queen and the Dauphin all accompanied the army. Charles was confused and barely lucid, his acts dictated at every point by his ministers and his captains. No one doubted that the real commander was the Count of Armagnac. Instead of the upright white cross traditionally worn by French royal troops they all wore the diagonal white sash that the Counts

of Armagnac had long ago adopted as their emblem. It was the emblem of a party. Yet even the King and the Dauphin wore it, as traditionalists noted with disgust. The Dauphin had misgivings about the whole enterprise. He had long ago lost whatever affection he had ever had for John the Fearless, but he always doubted the wisdom of fighting a full-scale war against him to satisfy the vengeful agenda of Charles of Orléans and Bernard of Armagnac. There was nothing that he could do, however, while his father remained capable of at least the outward forms of command.[22]

John the Fearless could not hope to meet the Armagnac onslaught on equal terms. He had planted large garrisons at Soissons and Compiègne during his retreat from Paris to impede their advance while he set about the slow business of building up his strength in Artois and Walloon Flanders. In Burgundy the Duchess summoned John's retainers and vassals to go to his assistance. But the recruiting officers encountered serious resistance everywhere. Letters had been sent out in Charles VI's name warning potential recruits of the consequences of treason. Many of them refused to fight against the King. The towns of Flanders declined to send him troops and the Estates meeting at Ghent would not support him financially either. The citizens of Arras, who had no desire to be caught between the millstones of France and Burgundy, were unwilling even to defend their city. John the Fearless had to occupy it by force. The Count of Saint-Pol, John's lieutenant in the province, withdrew to his estates in Picardy claiming to have injured his leg. His neighbour Jacques de Châtillon did the same, pleading an attack of gout. In Burgundy the Duke's officials were obliged to recruit heavily in the Imperial county where the conflict of loyalties was less acute since it was technically not part of France. As a result the Duke never had more than 5,000 men at his disposal plus an estimated 3,000 to 4,000 *gros varlets*, barely a third of the strength of the Armagnacs.[23]

On about 20 April 1414 the princes' army arrived beneath the walls of Compiègne. The town occupied an important position on the south bank of the Oise close to its confluence with the Aisne. It was defended by the Flemish nobleman Hughes de Lannoy, a veteran of the Baltic crusades and the wars of Liège. Lannoy had a garrison of about 500 men including a corps of English archers. He conducted a spirited defence. His sortie parties seriously disrupted the efforts of the besiegers. They destroyed their encampments. They attacked artillery positions, spiked the larger artillery pieces and captured the smaller ones together with some of their crews. They inflicted heavy casualties. But once the Armagnacs' engineers had succeeded in bridging the river and establishing themselves on

both banks the fate of the town was sealed. The garrison appealed to John the Fearless to relieve them. He, however, did not have the troops to spare and authorised them to negotiate instead. The bargaining raised all the harsh dilemmas of divided allegiances in a civil war. To refuse entry to a town to the King or his officers was treason. Appearing before the King in his lodgings, Hughes de Lannoy would not accept that he was a traitor. But his only answer was that Charles was not in command of his own affairs. He had served the King loyally, he said, on the orders of the Duke of Burgundy who was himself the King's loyal servant. The Count of Armagnac would have preferred to make an example of the defenders and kill them all, even at the cost of a longer siege. But he was unable to carry the other captains with him. They insisted on offering terms. On 7 May Compiègne surrendered. The garrison was allowed to leave with all their horses and equipment upon swearing never again to bear arms against the King.[24]

Soissons, another important bridge-town twenty-five miles to the east on the Aisne, was besieged on the day after Compiègne surrendered. It was an unheroic affair. The captain of the place was Enguerrand de Bournonville. The Armagnacs loathed him for the prominent part that he had played in their humiliation outside Paris in 1411 at a time when the King had been the puppet of the Duke of Burgundy. Like Lannoy, Bournonville rejected the accusations of treason thrown at him by the officers who summoned him to surrender in the King's name. He had fought for the King in the 'last war', he replied, and he would open the gates for him now. But not for the army of the Duke of Orléans. This was bravado. Soissons was weak, as Bournonville knew. The defenders were divided between the city itself and the fortified monastic *bourg* of St Médard on the other side of the river. In both city and *bourg* the soldiers of the garrison were at odds with the citizens and divided among themselves. Some of them were lukewarm about the cause. Some had kinsmen in the Armagnac army. Most were afraid for their lives. A contingent of English mercenaries were clamouring for their pay and meditating treachery.

Within a few days Bournonville had decided that the defence was hopeless. He appealed to the Duke of Burgundy for help. 'It is a terrible thing for us', he wrote, 'to find ourselves fighting against the King our sovereign and natural lord and to see such a great host … bent on our destruction.' John the Fearless never read these words. The letter was brought to the Armagnac commanders when the messenger was captured trying to get through the siege lines. On 20 May the abbot of St Médard took matters into his own hands. Defying the Burgundian garrison of the *bourg* he took possession of

the keys and opened the gates to the Armagnac troops outside. When the news of the betrayal reached the defenders of the city morale collapsed. Enguerrand de Bournonville decided to escape with the garrison at night and fight their way through the enemy lines, leaving the inhabitants to their fate. But not everyone had the stomach for this high-risk strategy. A young nobleman of the garrison called Simon de Craon sent a message to his relatives in the enemy camp offering to deliver up Enguerrand de Bournonville himself in return for lenient terms for everyone else. That night when Bournonville arrived at the gate to lead the exodus through the siege lines he found Craon and his companions blocking his way. There was a riot. The magistrates were alerted. The tocsin rang. Crowds of citizens flooded onto the streets with torches in one hand and swords in the other. The besiegers, hearing the tumult and guessing what was happening, decided upon an immediate assault. As soon as there was enough light they stormed the walls from five points at once. After two hours of desperate fighting on the walls and in the breaches, the English contingent in the garrison opened a postern gate by the water's edge to let in their fellow countrymen fighting with the Armagnac host. At the same moment the companies of the Duke of Bar, who were stationed on the opposite side of the river, waded across and seized the bridge over the Aisne. The Count of Armagnac's banner appeared over a tower. The defenders fell back and the besiegers poured over the walls on all sides. Cries of 'Armagnac!' and *'Ville gagnée!'* were heard everywhere.

In the code of war of the late middle ages the defenders of a city taken by storm could expect no mercy. The sack of Soissons was one of the worst of its kind. The houses and churches were systematically looted. Soldiers and citizens were indiscriminately cut down. Women were raped. Many fled to the river and were drowned trying to swim across. About 1,200 people lost their lives.[25] When the sack was over the retribution continued. This time there was no one to stop the Count of Armagnac making a hideous example to advertise the perils of resistance. Enguerrand de Bournonville, who had been badly wounded in the final moment of the fighting, was beheaded in the city's market. According to the Flemish chronicler Oliver van Dixmude, who claims to have had it from an eye-witness, the wounded captain called for a drink on the scaffold to toast the Duke of Burgundy 'and the downfall of all his enemies'. Several prominent members of the garrison were executed with him, along with a number of citizens who were held responsible for opening the gates to John the Fearless in February. Over the following days survivors from the garrison including a

number of English archers were taken out in groups and hanged from improvised gibbets in front of the gates and by the King's lodgings. Twenty-five prominent citizens were loaded with chains and taken off in carts to be executed in Paris.[26]

At the end of May 1414 the princes' army split into two. The smaller section moved south-east from Soissons to invade Burgundy. The main body planned to press northward to invade Artois. The grimness of the Duke of Burgundy's situation was brought home to him when his own brother Philip Count of Nevers abandoned his cause. Philip's share of his father's domains, comprising the counties of Nevers and Rethel and scattered territories in Champagne, was more vulnerable than John's. So, at the beginning of June 1414, he came before Charles VI in the abbey of St Martin at Laon and made an abject submission. He had been misled, he said, by the Dauphin's supposed letters into believing that he was acting in the King's interest. He promised never again to support his brother's cause and was made to put his domains under the control of the King's officers, retaining the income but none of the political influence or military power. If ever he were ever to break his undertakings it was agreed that his domains would be definitively forfeit to the Crown. Philip clearly thought that the Armagnacs had won.[27]

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On 30 April 1414 the English Parliament met at Leicester in a temporary timber hall next to the Franciscan convent. The opening speech by the Chancellor, Henry Beaufort, said nothing about relations with France but the subject must have been in everyone's minds. Henry Scrope and Hugh Mortimer arrived from Paris early in May with a first-hand account of the events unfolding in northern France. They were joined by four ambassadors of the Duke of Burgundy who had recently arrived in England. Their leader was the Chancellor of Flanders, Raoul Le Maire, and they included some of John the Fearless's closest confidants. Henry V made sure that the French would learn of their presence. They were ostentatiously received and extravagantly feasted. Charles VI's diplomatic secretary Gontier Col, who had stayed behind in London to maintain contact with the English court after the departure of the last French embassy, was invited to Leicester to observe the spectacle. A contemporary reported that Parliament had 'much secret business to discuss which only became known later'. How far Henry shared his plans with Parliament can only be guessed, but for the moment the King was managing expectations for another day. Bishop Beaufort told them that Henry was asking for no subsidy 'in the hope that he would find them more ready and willing to satisfy

his needs in time to come'.[28]

Negotiations with the Burgundians were conducted by Henry Chichele, supported by Scrope and Mortimer. Their exchanges are recorded in the vivid report prepared for the English King. Ostensibly Le Maire and his colleagues had come to press the old proposal that Henry V should marry one of the Duke's daughters. But the discussions quickly passed over that subject and turned to the more pressing question of English military support for John's faltering cause in France. The Burgundians wanted a military alliance and a commitment of 500 English men-at-arms and 1,000 archers for at least three months, all at Henry's expense. In return John was prepared to contribute 500 or 1,000 men-at-arms to help the English conquer the lands of Bernard of Armagnac and Charles d'Albret in the south-west together with John of Orléans' county of Angoulême. After that, the ambassadors declared, they would embark together 'like brothers and partners' on the conquest of the Norman domains of the Count of Eu and the Count of Alençon and the domains of the house of Orléans in the Loire, Champagne and Picardy. Once these territories had been conquered they were to be shared out between the 'brothers and partners' in proportion to their contributions to the campaign.

The problem about these proposals was that, as John's representatives made clear, the alliance would be directed only against the princes of the league of Gien. He was not binding himself to make war on the King of France or the Dauphin. The English representatives were sceptical. They were well informed about John's recent problems and asked some difficult questions. What would happen if the French King ordered John to abandon the English alliance and make peace with the Armagnacs? He would refuse, came the answer. And if Charles VI confronted John by force, what then? The ambassadors were less certain about that. They would have to ask their master but they thought that he would try to explain himself to the King while doing all that he could to sustain Henry V's cause. What if during the joint campaign Henry V attacked a castle belonging to the King? They 'neither knew nor dared' to answer that question, they said; they would have to ask for instructions. What guarantees could John give the English King that he would honour his promises, the Englishmen asked, remembering perhaps Edward III's unstable relationship with Charles the Bad. There would be sealed instruments, oaths and all the usual things, the Burgundians replied.

After these exchanges the English came to the point. How could they have any confidence in an alliance with John the Fearless? Henry V was a sovereign in his own country and claimed to be King

in France whereas John the Fearless acknowledged the sovereignty of Charles VI. Henry was a free agent while John was not. There would be no real reciprocity between them for as long as Henry's target was the French state and John claimed to be part of that state. Chichele and his colleagues had touched on a point which would remain the Duke's abiding dilemma for the rest of his career. They got no clear answer. The two sides agreed that their discussions had raised 'questions and doubts' which would have to be resolved before any progress could be made. A knight in the Burgundian entourage was sent back to Arras to consult the Duke. Further instructions appear to have been received and negotiations briefly resumed at the beginning of June. This time Henry Scrope led the English team. It is clear from his instructions that the English believed that the only acceptable way for John to solve his dilemma about sovereignty was to recognise Henry V as King of France and do homage to him. But it is equally clear that John's ambassadors had no power to agree to such a radical breach with the Valois dynasty to which their master belonged. Draft articles of agreement were drawn up which have not survived, but by this time Raoul Le Maire had already left. The rest of the Burgundian embassy followed him a fortnight later. Nothing was agreed.[29]

Gontier Col left at about the same time to present his report to the French royal council. He seems to have told them that the English were unable to agree which side to back. This was true. Henry V favoured an alliance with the Duke of Burgundy as he always had. His view was supported by John of Lancaster, the most politically astute of his brothers, who had recently been created Duke of Bedford. The Duke of Clarence and the Duke of York were pressing for a deal with the Armagnac princes, whom they knew and liked and with whom they had cooperated fruitfully in 1412 and 1413. They were supported by the youngest of the King's brothers, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester. At this stage, however, the situation was too fluid for any decision to be possible. For the next year Henry V backed neither side. Instead he pursued a crude policy of trying to sell his support to the highest bidder. Shortly after the French and Burgundian ambassadors had departed he sent simultaneous embassies to both the Duke of Burgundy and the court of France. Henry Scrope and Hugh Mortimer took the leading part in the negotiations with John the Fearless. They were assisted by two newcomers to the world of English diplomacy: the King's convivial political manager Thomas Chaucer, speaker of the last Parliament and son of the poet; and Philip Morgan, an intelligent, conscientious Welshman who had recently joined the English chancery and would shortly make himself indispensable. They left

for Flanders in the last week of June. The ambassadors to the court of France left a fortnight later, crossing to Dieppe instead of Calais in order to avoid passing through John's territories. Theirs was the most imposing embassy to visit France for twenty years. They were led by two bishops, Thomas Langley of Durham and Richard Courtenay of Norwich. Langley was a career administrator and former Chancellor, probably the most experienced diplomat in Henry's service. Courtenay was a very different kind of man. He was a worldly, aristocratic churchman who owed his rapid elevation to the friendship of the King and his kinship with the Earls of Devon. A contemporary described him as a man of 'imposing stature and superior intelligence, as distinguished for his eloquence and learning as for all his other noble endowments'. The principal lay members of the embassy, Richard lord Grey of Codnor and Thomas Montagu Earl of Salisbury, were both primarily soldiers. Grey had served as Admiral of the north in the previous reign and fought with distinction in Scotland and Wales. Salisbury, a younger man at the threshold of his career, had fought with Clarence in France and had recently been elected to the Order of the Garter. All of these men were close to the King and knew his mind as well as anyone. They were accompanied by a suite of 500 horsemen in livery and a mountain of baggage which required a fleet of transports to carry it across the Channel.[30]

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While Henry V's council prepared the ambassadors' instructions the Armagnac army was moving slowly north across the great plain of Picardy. At the beginning of June 1414 a proclamation issued from Laon called for reinforcements to boost the strength of an army that was already too large for speed and whose wage bill was rapidly outrunning the government's resources. The *taille* imposed in March was increased by 50 per cent, bringing it to 900,000 *livres*. By 14 June the princes had reached the Somme at Saint-Quentin. Here they lost the initiative in a confused welter of orders and counter-orders. Their initial plan was to advance north-east to put themselves between the Duke of Burgundy's troops from Artois and Flanders, which were concentrated around Arras, and the contingent from the duchy and county of Burgundy, which was marching west through Hainaut to join them. The Count of Armagnac and the Duke of Bourbon took some 4,000 mounted men and made for the Sambre to intercept this force while the rest of the ungainly host followed slowly on behind. Armagnac and Bourbon succeeded in catching the Burgundian rearguard near Merbes-le-Château on the Sambre in Hainaut and inflicted heavy losses on

them. But they were prevented from pressing home their advantage by the Count of Hainaut, who protested against the invasion of his territory. As a result most of the companies from Burgundy arrived safely at Douai in Walloon Flanders where John the Fearless had established his headquarters. Baulked in Hainaut, Armagnac and Bourbon withdrew south and rejoined the main body of the army. The whole host returned to Saint-Quentin. After a pause to rethink the strategy, the army resumed its march, this time heading west for Arras.[31]

On about 12 July 1414 the French royal host entered the county of Artois, the King at its head with a squire riding beside him holding the *Oriflamme* 'as if he was fighting the Saracens'. The army's slow progress and changes of plan had given John the Fearless time to build up his forces. He had prepared his defence with considerable skill. His army was divided into three roughly equal corps. About 1,500 men, including a contingent of English mercenaries, were stationed in Arras itself. Another 1,500 had mustered at Bapaume and then been dispersed among the castles of the region from which they would be able to harass the French army's rear, fall on its foragers and disrupt its supply lines. The rest of the Burgundian army, comprising between 1,500 and 2,000 men from the duchy and county of Burgundy, were held in reserve under John's personal command around Douai. The Duke knew that he was too weak to meet the French army in the field. His strategy was to conduct a fighting retreat, wearing his enemies down and exhausting their funds and supplies, until they were ready to agree a compromise peace.[32]

The first major obstacle in the way of the royal army was Bapaume. Standing on a rock over the cloth road from Flanders to Paris, Bapaume was defended by a garrison of 200 men-at-arms and a large force of archers. But the fortress was old and in bad repair, inadequately equipped and poorly stocked for a long siege. As soon as the French army arrived beneath its walls they summoned the place to surrender and began to prepare an assault. Inside the fortress the defenders held a council of war. Some of them evidently felt uncomfortable about openly defying the King. The captain, Ferri de Hangest, was a cousin of the Master of the Royal Archers. His heart is unlikely to have been in it. They decided that the place could not be defended. They were allowed a week's truce to obtain the Duke of Burgundy's authority to surrender. On about 19 July they opened their gates on terms. The royal coat of arms was painted on the gate and the garrison marched out with their weapons, horses and baggage under protection of the Constable, to catcalls and mockery from the massed ranks of the royal army

gathered outside. The amnesty did not extend to anyone who had been banished from Paris after the collapse of the Cabochian revolution or had served in the garrisons of Compiègne or Soissons. There were a number of men in these categories among the garrison. They tried to disguise themselves as *gros varlets*, pulling their basinets over their faces as they came out of the gates. But they were recognised and pulled out of the ranks. Others tried to flee and were caught. Most were subsequently executed.[33]

Three days later, on 22 July, the vanguard of the royal army, commanded by the Constable and the Duke of Bourbon, arrived before the walls of Arras. Arras was a large walled city on the left bank of the River Scarpe, which had once, at the height of the thirteenth-century textile boom, been among the richest in France. Like many French cities it was split between the old *cité* dominated by the cathedral and inhabited by ecclesiastics and judges and the more populous walled *bourg*, which had grown up around the rich abbey of St Vaast to the east and enclosed most of the commercial and industrial districts. The defenders were ready. Women and children had been ordered out. All male inhabitants had been required to lay in stocks for at least four months or leave with their families. Improvised fortifications protected by trenches and felled trees had been constructed in front of the gates, behind which the defenders had set up their artillery. The suburbs beyond the walls, which included several fine churches, had been razed in order to leave them a clear field of fire. The defence of the town was directed by the young Picard nobleman John of Luxembourg, a nephew of the Count of Saint-Pol who was just embarking at the age of twenty-four on a famous military career in the service of the house of Burgundy. He had a very large garrison, about 1,200 men in Arras itself and some 300 more in the castle of Bellemotte about a mile east of the city by the road from Douai. The King and the Dauphin together with the Constable and most of the princes encamped around the old Templars' house south-east of the town. The Duke of Bourbon occupied a narrow strip of land between the Scarpe and the *cité* on the north. The bulk of the royal army, including the Gascon contingents of the Count of Armagnac, the retainers of the house of Orléans, the Lorrainers of the Duke of Bar, and the Normans of the Count of Alençon, was deployed north-east of the city, by the Douai road by which any army of relief was expected to come.

The besiegers never succeeded in completing the investment of Arras. At least two gates were always open to traffic throughout the siege. At an early stage the Armagnac captains decided that it was not feasible to take the place by assault. They settled down to a long

process of attrition in which artillery played the main role. They progressively battered the city with bombards, destroying many of its fine patrician mansions. Their culverins (a sort of primitive arquebus) caused carnage among the troops stationed on the walls. But the besiegers lacked large-calibre bombards of the kind which John the Fearless had deployed in 1411 and 1412. Their artillery was largely ineffective against the gates and ramparts. The defenders fought back to rather greater effect with their own artillery. They met mines with countermines, fighting battles with the enemy in the dark, confined spaces underground. They mounted highly effective sorties into the besiegers' lines. These operations were supported by the Burgundian garrisons of the surrounding castles. The garrison of Bellemotte continually harassed the siege lines east of the city where the besiegers were most heavily concentrated. The more distant garrisons raided behind the besiegers' lines, falling on their foragers and cutting their supply routes. As in most encounters of this brutal civil war there were supporters of each side serving in the ranks of the other. Anonymous messages from the royal host disclosed details of the besiegers' war councils to John of Luxembourg. The artilleryman in charge of *La Bourgeoise*, the largest of the King's bombards, deliberately aimed high or wide. When this was noticed by Arthur de Richemont the gunner fled into the city bringing with him valuable information about the disposition of the besieging forces.[34]

The King's march from Paris had been punctuated at every stage by the Duke of Burgundy's attempts to negotiate a settlement. The Armagnac princes had no interest in negotiations. They had resolved at the outset of the campaign that there would be no talks with the enemy, very much as John the Fearless and his partisans had done during the Bourges campaign of 1412. But, like John, they found it hard to insist on this uncompromising line. It depended on the King remaining lucid enough to prevent the Dauphin from taking over, yet not so lucid as to have a mind of his own. Against this background John the Fearless's choice of intermediaries was nicely judged. His brother Anthony Duke of Brabant and his sister Margaret Countess of Hainaut had first come before the King at Saint-Quentin in the middle of June. They were not just gracious diplomats but Charles VI's first cousins. Their status entitled them to insist on a private audience. In the princes' absence they were able to persuade the King to receive emissaries from John the Fearless. 'If he is looking for mercy that is something that I can offer in abundance,' Charles is reported to have told them. The news was ill-received in the Armagnac camp when it was reported there.

As a result, when Anthony and Margaret returned to the King at

Péronne at the end of June, accompanied by the representatives of the Four Members of Flanders, they found the atmosphere palpably hostile. Rowdies sang loud songs beneath the windows of their lodgings lamenting the death of Louis of Orléans. When the King and the Dauphin received them it was obvious at once that the princes were not going to let themselves be circumvented again. John, they said, would have to come before the King in person and confess his guilt, throwing himself on the King's mercy before there could be any prospect of peace. The Duke and the Countess were visibly dismayed. They did not think that there was any chance of John swallowing his pride so completely after all that had happened over the past seven years.

The Flemings received an even more disconcerting message. The King appears to have lost his train of thought half-way through his audience with them and suddenly brought it to an end, perfunctorily referring them to the Dauphin and in breach of all the prescribed protocol shaking each ambassador by the hand as he left. When they went before the Dauphin the prince presided in silence from the throne as the Armagnac Chancellor of France, Henri de Marle, recounted the whole history of the Duke of Burgundy's crimes and declared that the King's intention was to take possession of all his domains in France. The Flemings, taken aback by this message, reserved their reply until the following day. When they returned the next morning they asked the Dauphin what evidence of submission he was expecting of the Duke. The Dauphin withdrew with the princes to a nearby room to consider their answer. None, they replied when they returned. They had lately learned that the Duke of Burgundy had agreed with the English to surrender four major ports of Flanders to them. They therefore intended to proceed against him by force of arms and in no other way.[35]

The intelligence that the French ministers had received about John the Fearless's dealings with the English was presumably based on rumours about the negotiations at Leicester. It was in fact inaccurate. Nothing had been agreed at Leicester. But John was content that the French King's ministers should know that he had been dealing with the English. They need to know that if they pushed him too hard he would join forces with the enemy. Scrope and Mortimer and their colleagues had recently arrived at Calais. On 16 July 1414 the Duke of Burgundy received them at Ypres with enough ceremony and noise to ensure that their presence was reported to the Armagnac leaders, then encamped outside Bapaume. On the very next morning, before anything of substance could be discussed, John left hurriedly for Lille to confer with his brother and sister about the next stage of their negotiation with the French

court. Together the siblings drew up some draft terms to be offered to the King and the Dauphin. They did not amount to much. All that John was willing to offer was his regret that he had lost Charles's favour, an undertaking to admit him to the towns and castles of his French domains and, if pressed, a promise to make all his officers and captains swear an oath not to bear arms against the King. In return for this he expected the Armagnacs to annul the ordinances against him, to withdraw the discreditable allegations that they had distributed across France, to allow his supporters to recover the property and offices from which they had been evicted and to revoke the decrees banishing the leaders of the Cabochian revolution. The Duke of Brabant and his sister must have set out with a heavy heart along the Arras road with this uncompromising message. But they were fortunate in their timing. When their splendid cavalcade met the Dauphin on the road between Bapaume and Arras they found that Charles VI had relapsed once more into incoherence. This meant that the Dauphin automatically assumed authority over the army. Louis was Delphic about his plans. A volte-face would require careful management. He told the Duke and the Countess to come back after he had reached Arras. He hoped that by then he would have an answer that 'might satisfy them'.[36]

The Duke of Burgundy returned to Ypres and resumed his discussions with the English ambassadors just as the siege of Arras was beginning. It is hard to say who was double-crossing whom in this duplicitous negotiation. John the Fearless knew that the English were simultaneously negotiating with the Armagnac government. He had gone to some trouble to conceal the fact that he was negotiating with them too. His English visitors were confined to Ypres while he conducted his dealings with the Dauphin from Douai and Lille. But the region was alive with spies and informers and it is unlikely that Scrope and Mortimer were deceived. The truth was that both sides regarded talk of an Anglo-Burgundian alliance mainly as a threat designed to extract better terms from the French court. John deliberately spun out the talks at Ypres for two weeks while the Duke of Brabant and the Countess of Hainaut explored the possibilities of a deal with the Dauphin. They discussed at great length the arrangements for the proposed Anglo-Burgundian campaign. The draft articles were modified to add Jean de Berry's county of Poitou to the spoils to be claimed by the English. But John prevaricated on the critical questions left open at Leicester. The English pressed him on how he proposed to give military support to Henry V's invasion of France while reserving his allegiance to Charles VI. John said that he would deal with that question by writing privately to Henry V. But he declared that he

would be willing to support the English King even in an attack on a royal castle. He would even acquiesce in Henry's attempt to acquire the French crown. The English ambassadors were doubtful. They recorded their demands in writing and presented the document to the Duke for his response. They did not think that John's word was a sufficient assurance of performance. They demanded security: the four strategic places which the French were convinced that John had already promised them. Boulogne, Hesdin, Éperlecques and Tournehem, they declared, should to be surrendered to the English King for a period of two years with the right to station 500 men-at-arms and 1,000 archers there, all at John's expense. John deferred his answer to this. When could they expect John to commit himself? The Duke agreed that within six weeks he would send a 'summons' to the King and the Dauphin. By this he probably meant a letter of defiance formally renouncing his obligations as a vassal. A draft of this document was agreed. Then, on 5 August 1414, the Duke of Burgundy left for Lille and a few days later the English agents returned to Calais to await developments.[37]

On 8 August 1414 the other English embassy entered Paris in great pomp. They were met on the road from Saint-Denis by an imposing procession of prelates and councillors of the Parlement and escorted down the Rue Saint-Denis to the royal Palace on the Cité. There they were welcomed from the dais of the great hall by the Duke of Berry, the only royal prince left in Paris. The ambassadors were assigned magnificent quarters in various princely mansions of the city, plied with gifts and entertained daily with jousts, balls and banquets. In the luxury capital of Europe the tradesmen of Paris besieged their lodgings with offers of jewellery, scientific instruments, tapestries and manuscripts. They did not get down to business until they had been there for a week.

The scene was the Chambre Verte of the Palace on the Cité, part of the old royal apartments overlooking the gardens. Ranged opposite the Englishmen were the Duke of Berry and the rump of the royal council that was not with the Dauphin and the Count of Armagnac outside Arras. The English tended to prepare for such occasions like lawyers appealing to authority rather than politicians trading for advantage. They would turn up, as an exasperated French diplomat once complained, with 'beautiful and important-looking volumes' in which they had recorded all of their demands along with the juridical and historical evidence to support them, which they would consult at frequent intervals. True to form they appeared with a large bound volume of past treaties between England and France. The urbane Bishop of Norwich acted as spokesman. Speaking at length in Latin he began in the fashion of a

public sermon with a quotation from the Book of Joshua: 'We be come from a far country, now therefore make ye a league with us.' The King of England, said Courtenay, had detected a real interest among the French princes in peace, and was glad of it. He too wanted peace. But first there would have to be justice, amends for past wrongs and some evidence of true friendship. Henry, he reminded them, had already demanded the recognition of his hereditary right to the crown of France but he knew that this was not acceptable to the French and was willing to move on to other matters on which agreement might be easier to achieve. He demanded the cession to himself of the entire territory in western France ceded to Edward III at the treaty of Brétigny, free of any feudal obligations to the French crown. In addition the English King claimed every territory which his ancestors had ever ruled or claimed to rule: the old Angevin provinces of Normandy, Touraine, Anjou and Maine, the overlordship of Brittany and Flanders, the coastal territory between Flanders and the Somme, even the half share of the county of Provence once claimed by Henry III nearly two centuries before. In addition Henry wanted full payment of the 1,600,000 *écus* which remained unpaid from the ransom of John II. If a reasonable settlement could be reached on these points Henry V was willing to marry Catherine of France. Her dowry would need to be discussed but Henry would expect at least 2,000,000 *écus*.

These preposterous demands, amounting to about half the national territory of France including its entire Atlantic seaboard, were answered by the Duke of Berry with surprising equanimity. He told the ambassadors that no definitive answer could be given in the absence of both the King and the Dauphin. But he would give them a provisional answer. He brushed aside the English claim to the French crown as unworthy of serious consideration. He ignored the claims to the old Angevin provinces and pointed out that Provence was not even part of France. But he was more accommodating when it came to the south-west. The French, he said, were in principle prepared to consider restoring all of the provinces ceded to England at Brétigny except for Poitou (part of Berry's own appanage) and Limousin. But any territory which they restored would have to remain part of the French kingdom and be held as a fief of the French King. The Duke of Berry's territorial proposals fell not far short of the offers that his representatives had made in London in May 1412. In spite of the partisan spirit in which that offer had been made it probably represented what Berry truly believed to be in France's long-term interests. As to Henry's financial demands the Duke said that the French government would discuss the arrears of the ransom when the territorial concessions had been agreed. They

would pay a reasonable dowry upon Catherine's marriage but it would not be 2,000,000 *écus*; 600,000 was the sort of figure that they were used to paying. This seemed promising enough. According to the chronicler of Saint-Denis the English ambassadors seemed satisfied with the Duke of Berry's answer. But they had obviously hoped for better. How much better is hard to say but the breaking point is likely to have been the French insistence on retaining ultimate sovereignty over Aquitaine. 'Careful and wide-ranging' exchanges between the two sides over the following fortnight or so failed to bring them any closer. At about the beginning of September the ambassadors left for Harfleur to take ship for England. They regarded their mission as a failure.[38]

At the end of August 1414 the Duke of Brabant and the Countess of Hainaut returned to the royal camp outside Arras. They brought with them yet another set of proposals from their brother. These were somewhat more generous than the earlier version. They included a formal surrender of Arras, which would save the honour of the besiegers but would leave the city in the hands of John's garrison and officials. Both sides were by now under heavy pressure. The Duke of Burgundy had run out of money. The government's finances were in no better shape. Conditions in the camps outside Arras were deteriorating fast. Food was running short. The weather was changeable, hot August days alternating with torrential downpours. Dysentery had begun to take hold. Losses were mounting among both horses and men. The Duke's new proposals aroused acrimonious debate among the Armagnac leaders. The surviving accounts give a rare insight into the mechanics of decision-making in the disfunctional council of Charles VI. The Dauphin was determined to bring an end to the campaign, which he regarded as pointless and destructive of his father's realm. Calling for his Chancellor Jean Jouvenel, who had long been an advocate of peace, he told him that he wanted an agreement with the Duke of Burgundy. The Duke's latest proposals, he said, were 'expedient and the best that can be had'. He worked on his father in his brief intervals of lucidity. A council meeting was summoned to receive the Duke of Burgundy's siblings. Charles was just about well enough to preside. Although he rarely intervened these days at council meetings, in the middle of the proceedings he managed to utter the thought that the Burgundian proposals 'seemed reasonable and ought to be considered'. The assembled princes were appalled. They had come to Arras for revenge, not compromise. The Breton and Gascon captains were furious. They were on the verge of victory. The spoil of the city was almost in their grasp. The meeting broke up in confusion without a decision.

According to Jean Jouvenel's son, who presumably got the story from him, early the next morning one of the princes managed to talk his way into the King's bedroom and pinched his foot under the bedclothes. 'What do you want?' said the King, 'Is there any news?' 'No my Lord, only that your men here are saying that as soon as you say the word the city will be assaulted with every chance of forcing an entry.' 'But our cousin of Burgundy is willing to surrender it without an assault and we need peace.' 'How can you make peace with that evil and disloyal traitor who murdered your brother?' 'But all that has been forgiven with the consent of his son.' 'Alas, my Lord, you will never again see your brother.' 'Go away, good cousin, I will see him right enough at the last judgment.' When the council reassembled later that morning it was the Dauphin's Chancellor Jean Jouvenel and not the implacable Chancellor of France, Henri de Marle, who acted as the King's spokesman. An agreement with the Duke of Burgundy had become essential, he said. The English were threatening to invade. There was no more money to pay the army's wages. The land around them had been so thoroughly looted that there was no more fodder for the horses or victuals for the men. The council authorised negotiations, with obvious ill-will. The Dauphin took control of them. The Armagnac princes were excluded, with the exception of the Count of Alençon. He was fed up with the siege and alone of the Armagnac leaders had come round to the Dauphin's position. It was the story of the siege of Bourges all over again.[39]

After a few days of talks in the Dauphin's tents a preliminary agreement was reached on 4 September 1414, which was to be confirmed later by a formal treaty of peace when the King had recovered. The Duke of Burgundy conceded what he had lost anyway but made few other concessions. There was yet another formal confirmation of the 'hollow peace' of Chartres together with the three equally hollow treaties which had been made since. John did not make amends for the murder of Louis of Orléans or even acknowledge his guilt. Nor would he go before the King or the Dauphin in person to beg their pardon for having taken up arms against them. He would only promise that his brother and sister and the representatives of the Four Members of Flanders would do it on his behalf. He and his allies and his garrison commanders were to swear not to take up arms against the Crown again. The Dauphin accepted the assurance of John's emissaries that nothing had been agreed with the English and John agreed to abandon all further negotiations with them. Meanwhile he promised to deliver up Arras together with the royal fortresses of Cherbourg and Caen in Normandy, Chinon in the Loire valley and Le Crotoy at the mouth

of the Somme, which had been occupied by his troops for the past three years. The Cabochian leaders still living under his protection would be expelled from his domains. Their fate and that of other clients and allies of John the Fearless was to be left for the King and the Dauphin to decide. These last undertakings were qualified by a secret addendum. In this document the Dauphin agreed that the surrender of Arras would be a purely nominal one. The Dauphin and a handful of his officers would take formal possession of the place and would then depart with the army within four to six days, leaving John's garrison in effective control. As for John's followers the Dauphin undertook that notwithstanding the reservation of the position in the public instrument they would all be amnestied, their banishments revoked and their confiscated assets restored to them. Politically perhaps the most significant provision of the treaty was the clause that confirmed the Duke of Burgundy's exclusion from power. He was formally forbidden to come to court without an express summons by the King approved by the Queen, the Dauphin and the whole council, and authenticated by the Chancellor of France under the great seal.[40]

The terms provoked outrage among the Armagnac leaders even before the secret clauses became known. None of them had been consulted. Their calls for more time for consideration were brushed aside. The calls of the house of Orléans for vengeance for the murder of the last duke or at least an acknowledgement of guilt had passed unheeded. But the Dauphin was determined to impose his will. There was an uncomfortable moment in his tents after the open terms had been read out and the Duke of Brabant and Countess of Hainaut had sworn on their brother's behalf to observe them. The Dauphin turned to Charles of Orléans and called upon him to swear. 'It was not I who dishonoured the last peace,' he replied. 'Bring those who dishonoured it here to swear and then I will do your bidding.' The young prince refused three times, to the visible irritation of the Dauphin. Finally the Archbishop of Reims came up to him with a group of courtiers. 'My lord,' he said, 'do as the Duke of Guyenne asks.' Charles swore the oath. The Duke of Bourbon was about to make his own protest when the Dauphin cut him short, peremptorily ordering him to swear. Jean de Montaigu Archbishop of Sens, brother of the man whom John the Fearless had had judicially murdered, began to explain why he could not swear but he too was silenced. At nine o'clock on the evening of 4 September a blast of trumpets sounded from outside the King's tent to signal to the army that the fighting was at an end. On the following day the formalities were completed. The heralds proclaimed the peace in the encampment and at the street corners

of Arras. The Dauphin received the keys of the city and his banner appeared above the city's gates.

The departure of the royal army was chaotic. The night before, a fire broke out near the King's lodgings which rapidly spread through the camp, killing soldiers, prisoners and horses, destroying tents and supplies and spreading panic through the army. It was said to have been started by the Gascons, furious at being done out of the booty of Arras. The King had to be moved hurriedly to safety in a litter. The Counts of Armagnac and Alençon fled half-naked from their tents. The mass of the army broke up in disorder and dispersed. The princes departed in fury, abandoning much of their baggage and most of the artillery. The news of the debacle was received with mixed feelings in Paris. There was a spontaneous outburst of joy at the peace but stirrings of unrest in the working-class quarters. Men arriving at the churches to join the traditional celebratory processions found posters nailed to the doors calling them to rebellion. The city government was edgy and moved to suppress any opposition. There were serious misgivings among the patricians and those in the municipality who feared above all the return of the Cabochians. They complained to the Duke of Berry that they had not been consulted. He loftily replied that it was a matter for the princes and none of their business. 'We fight each other when we please and we make peace when we see fit,' he is reported to have said.[41]

On 22 September, less than three weeks after he had promised not to negotiate any more with the English, John the Fearless met Scrope and Mortimer and their colleagues for a final session in the abbey of St Bertin at Saint-Omer. The English were of course aware by now of the peace of Arras. The Duke admitted that this had caused him to 'defer' the break with Charles VI and the Dauphin which they had agreed upon at Ypres. He was evidently keen to keep the negotiations going, if only to maintain his bargaining power with the French court until the peace was formally confirmed. But the discussions were wholly unproductive because John was no longer in a position to commit himself to anything. After five days the talks were broken off.[42]

Notes

1
St Albans Chron., ii, 618–20; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 9–10; 'Procès Fusoris', 243–4.

2
Reg. Jurade, ii, 329 (Dorset quote); Harriss (1985), 81–2, 89.

3
Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 770–2; *Foed.*, ix, 3; Strecche, 'Chron.', 147; *Brut*, ii,

373; *Issues Exch.*, 325; Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 634–6; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 5; *Select Cases*, vii, 212–15; *CPR 1413–16*, 35.

4
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 556, 568, 576–80, 750, vi, 162, 164, 480–2; Guenée (1999 [1]), 217–18.

5
Foed., ix, 27, 786–7.

6
PRO E403/612, m. 5; *Foed.*, ix, 34–8, 57–60; PRO E364/47, m. 1 (Warwick, Scrope); *Itin. Jean*, 401 (numbers). Arguments: BL Cotton Tiberius B XII, fols 51vo–53vo; AN J546/8, 9.

7
PRO E101/321/13, E364/47, m. 1 (Scrope); *Itin. Jean*, 401, 402; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 406; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 120.

8
BL Add. Chart. 4311; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 158–60, 228; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 403–4; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 72–4. Saintonge: BN Fr. 7624, fols 216–216vo; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 222–8.

9
Foed., ix, 60, 69–70. On Col: Autrand (2000 [1]), 43; Coville (1934), 14–38; Clamanges, *Op.*, 259.

10
Embassy: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 228; AN KK250, fols 64vo–65; *Foed.*, ix, 189. Oldcastle: *Select Cases*, vii, 217–20; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 636–42; Strecche, 'Chron.', 148–9; Gregory, 'Chron.', 108; 'Extr. London Chrons.', 292–3; *Brut*, ii, 373–4; *Foed.*, ix, 89–90; *Issues Exch.*, 330–1, 331–2, 333; Aston, 24–6; Powell, 141–67 (summarises legal records).

11
Foed., ix, 88–9, 91–105; Chaplais, *Eng. Med. Dipl. Prac.*, no. 75 (p. 127); *Issues Exch.*, 329; Chaplais, *Eng. Med. Dipl. Prac.*, no. 240 (e) (p. 457). Tennis balls: the earliest version is in Strecche, 'Chron.', 150 (*c.* 1422).

12
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 164–8; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 412–13; *Itin. Jean*, 403.

13
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 216–18, 230–2; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 266; 267–9; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 419; *Itin. Jean*, 403–4; *Plancher, iii, nos 292–4; *Schnerb (1997), 310; Chauvelays, 223. John's contacts with Parisians: AD Côte d'Or B1576, fol. 224vo; AD Nord B1903, fols 64–65vo, 66vo–67, 68–68vo, 101vo.

14
Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 140–1 (certified copies); *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 234–8; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 420–1, 425–7. On Brimeu: Demurger, 238. Defensive measures: *Ord.*, x, 192–5; *Monstrelet, *Chron.*, vi, 133–7; *Plancher, iii, no. 295.

15
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, ii, 428, 431–4, vi, 140–1; AD Nord B1903, fols 64, 65vo (muster); *Itin. Jean*, 406–7; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 24–4, 240–2; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 266–7; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 145; *Flammermont, 268–9; *Carolus-Barré (1930), 50–2. Numbers: Chauvelays, 223–7.

16
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17
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18
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19
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20
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21
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 228–30; *Foed.*, ix, 102–4, 118–19; *Lettres des rois*, ii, 346–7 (misdated). Dates: PRO E364/47, m. 3 (Scrope), E364/48, m. 4d (Ware).
22
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23
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24
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25
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26
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27
*Plancher, iii, no. 296 (Burgundy wing); *Handelingen (1405–19)*, no. 538 (para. D.3 [e]); *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 330–6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 12–13.
28
Strecche, 'Chron.', 147; *Parl. Rolls*, ix, 36–7 [1]; PRO E364/47, m. 3 (Scrope); *Cartellieri (1912–14), iv, 12–13; *Foed.*, ix, 112, 139, 189; AD Nord B1903, fols 64vo, 66, 76; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 644 (Col). Burgundian ambassadors: Schnerb (2005), 314, 320–1; PRO E406/1.
29
*Cartellieri (1912–14), iv, 12–19; ibid., 20 ('articles drawn up at Leicester'); PRO E364/48, m. 1d (Scrope) ('certain articles and secret matters'); *Foed.*, ix, 136–8, 189; AD Nord B1903, fol. 76 (Le Maire's return, 6 June).
30

Col: *Foed.*, ix, 139; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 280 (presumably based on Col). Embassy to John: *Foed.*, ix, 141, 142–3; PRO E364/48, m. 1d (Scrope). Embassy to Paris: *Foed.*, ix, 150–2, 154; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 281; *Foed.*, ix, 131–3, 148, 150–2, 154; PRO E364/47, m. 3 (Bp Durham), E364/48, m. 1 (Morgan, Grey), m. 5 (Bp Norwich, Salisbury), E101/321/21, 26. On Courtney: *ODNB*, xiii, 684–5, *Gesta*, 44. On Salisbury: PRO C76/95, m. 14; H. E. L. Collins, 293. On Grey: *ODNB*, xxiii, 876.

31

Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 167; BN Fr. 25709/710 (*taille*); *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 338–40, 346; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 279–80; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 13–15.

32

AD Nord B1903, fols 214vo–244 (partial summary from BN Coll. Bourgogne 65 in Finot, 13–14); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 17–18, 28, 30; Fenin, *Mém.*, 48–9.

33

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 358–62, 364; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 18–21, 23–4; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 169–71 173.

34

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 370–4; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 22–3, 24–31; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 226–7; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 173–82; Fenin, *Mém.*, 45–9; 'Chron. Pays-Bas', 346–7. Topography: reconstruction based on plans of 1554 and 1618 in *Arras et la diplomatie Européenne, XV^{e}–XVI^{e} siècles*, ed. D. Clausel, C. Giry-Deloison and C. Leduc (2000), between 24 and 25.

35

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 336–8, 344–58; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 280; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, 13, 15–17.

36

English embassy: PRO E364/48, m. 1 (Morgan), 1d (Scrope); AD Nord B1903, fols 70–70vo; *Itin. Jean*, 410. Negotiations with Armagnacs: *Finot, 57–60; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 366.

37

Itin. Jean, 410–11; *Cartellieri (1912–14), iv, 20–5, 26, 29.

38

Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 190–1; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 376; 'Procès Fusoris', 173–4, 183, 187–8, 189, 190, 193, 274; *Foed.*, ix, 186, 209–12; AN J546/10 (French memorandum of English claims); Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 281; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 376. Chambre Verte: Guerout (1949–51), i, 141–3, ii, 95–6. 'Beautiful books': Montreuil, *Opera*, ii, 266.

39

Itin. Jean, 411; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 31–2; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 378–80; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 282–3; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 182; *Journ. B. Paris*, 55.

40

'Texte authentique', 204–12.

41

*Finot, 64–6; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 183–90; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 32–5; 'Geste des nobles', 152–3; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 378, 442–6; *Journ. B. Paris*, 55–6.

42

Itin. Jean, 411; *Cartellieri (1912–14), iv, 26–30.

CHAPTER X

‘With trety ye lose …’: Towards the Breach, 1414–1415

The embassy of Bishops Langley and Courtenay arrived back in London on 3 October 1414. Courtenay left at once with the Earl of Salisbury to report to the King at Sheen. They were probably accompanied by Philip Morgan, who had returned on the same day from Saint-Omer with a report of the abortive negotiations with the Duke of Burgundy. It is difficult to know what Henry’s real objective was at this stage. The Duke of Berry’s response to Bishop Courtenay in Paris suggested that he and his allies were prepared to cede most and possibly all of the Brétigny territories but not on the same basis as they had been ceded to Edward III, in full sovereignty. This had been the fault-line in more than a century of Anglo-French diplomacy. For the French what was at stake was nothing less than the territorial integrity of their realm. Successive kings of France had offered to cede territory in return for peace but they had never been willing to concede sovereignty over Aquitaine except briefly in the extraordinary circumstances of John II’s captivity in 1360. And, in spite of some hesitations at the end of Richard II’s reign, the English had never been willing to accept anything less. The issue went back to the debates within the English royal council under Edward I at the beginning of the fourteenth century. Bitter experience had taught them that for their kings to be sovereigns in their own country and vassals in France was an unworkable combination; and that if the French kings retained sovereignty in the south-west they would sooner or later claw back their losses through their courts, as they had done with such success in 1369. Many of those who advised Henry V could remember the heated arguments at the council of Stamford in 1392 and the Westminster Parliament of 1394, when Richard II’s proposal to recognise French sovereignty over Aquitaine had foundered on the objections of most of the English political class. Henry had no intention of awakening these old ghosts. The autumn of 1414 was the moment that he resolved on war with France. According to the St Albans chronicler Thomas Walsingham, the ambassadors reported that in their view the Duke of Berry had been deceiving them to gain time. This was hardly fair to a statesman who had promoted the cause of peace for

most of his long life. But Henry seems to have accepted it.[1]

Early in October 1414 the King returned to Westminster to preside at a great council. The assembly had been summoned to consider the ambassadors' reports. It was a well-attended and very military gathering with many knights participating as well as the peers whose presence was traditional. The King told them that he proposed to go to war to enforce his claims against France. The issue was whether to strike now while the French were divided and unready, or to exhaust the possibilities of diplomacy first. No record of the discussion has survived but echoes of it penetrated beyond the palace into the streets of London where other men were arguing out the old dilemmas of peace and war. Don't waste time jawing, urged a well-informed pamphleteer. It will only give the enemy time to arm himself while golden tongues talk you out of your rights. 'With fight ye wynne, with tret[y] ye lose … and that ye wynne ye wynne with sword.' The great council was more cautious than the pamphleteer. They thought that the results of the last embassy were promising enough to be followed up. Henry, they advised, should do nothing that might shed Christian blood or displease God until it was clear that diplomacy had failed. Another embassy should be sent to France to explore any 'reasonable mene way' to achieve a satisfactory compromise. Meanwhile the King should prepare an invasion of France in case the attempt failed. Once the council had dispersed Henry sent a herald to Paris to discover whether the French King's council was willing to continue the negotiations. He was told that they were. But over the following months it became increasingly obvious that Henry was only going through the motions of diplomacy, part of the careful preparation of public opinion for war. No one expected the French government to concede the critical question of sovereignty over Aquitaine. Over the following weeks the English government began to accumulate war material on a vast scale: armour, bows and arrows, siege engines, gunpowder artillery, scaling ladders, ships.[2]

Parliament opened at Westminster on 19 November 1414. The occasion was dominated by the question of relations with France. Thomas Chaucer, who had been part of the recent embassy to John the Fearless, was once more elected Speaker. Chancellor Beaufort's opening address departed for the first time in many years from the usual pious formulae. The King, he said, was well aware of the blessings of peace but 'man is given a time of peace and a time of war and toil'. The time had now come for the King to recover his inheritance and the rights of his crown outside the realm. To that end three things were needed: wise and loyal advice, the support of his people and a generous subsidy. Henry expected his war to be

profitable as well politically productive. If his patrimony were enlarged, Beaufort pointed out, the burden on his existing subjects would be reduced. The Commons granted two tenths and fifteenths spread over the next two years, an unusually generous subsidy. Yet they do not seem to have been any more enthusiastic about the prospect of a fresh invasion of France than the great council had been. They described the tax as a grant 'for the defence of your realm of England and the safe-keeping of the sea'. Parliament was dissolved on about 7 December. Five days later Bishops Langley and Courtenay left London on their final mission to Paris.[3]

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In France the peace of Arras was already falling apart. The terms were no more than heads of agreement hurriedly cobbled together in the camp outside the town. A final text would need to be drawn up and formally ratified once the King had recovered his senses. It had originally been intended to do this at a conference at Senlis later in September. But although successive dates were appointed for this event they all had to be put off. One reason was the King's continuing illness. Except in passing moments Charles VI remained incoherent throughout the autumn and winter months.[4] Another was obstruction by the Armagnac princes. They had accepted the peace of Arras through gritted teeth and welcomed the delay, which gave them the chance to fight back. A third was the Dauphin's own desire to put off the moment when he would have to pardon the Cabochians and other allies of John the Fearless in accordance with the secret articles and restore them to their offices and property. Louis knew that this would provoke a major crisis in his relations with the princes. He needed to prepare the ground in advance.

During the autumn of 1414, while Henry V was making warlike plans in England, there was a prolonged stand-off between the Dauphin and the princes in Paris. Louis of Guyenne had procured his sick father to seal an ordinance conferring on him complete control over the finances of the state. The ordinance was approved without a council meeting as Charles VI was being carried back to Paris in a litter with no one present apart from a secretary. Drawing on the proceeds of the *taille* raised to finance the Arras campaign, much of which had come in only after it was over, Louis of Guyenne now began to build up his own political party. He expanded his personal household, retaining men with lavish pensions and grants, as much as 60,000–80,000 *écus*' worth on some days according to his chancellor. His relations with the Armagnac leaders became increasingly tense. Far from forgiving their enemies as they had sworn to do at Arras, the Armagnacs raised the volume of their anti-

Burgundian propaganda, issuing broadsheets and promoting inflammatory public sermons. They already suspected that there were secret articles to the text agreed outside Arras. They were afraid that the Dauphin would pre-empt them and ratify the treaty on his own authority. They were determined to frustrate him, if necessary by force. For some months the main armed force at their disposal had been furnished by the Count of Armagnac. He withdrew from Paris in disgust after the campaign, taking his Gascon companies with him. But the princes were able to buy the support of the Count of Alençon by making him a duke. In addition Arthur de Richemont was persuaded to put 600 Breton soldiers at their disposal. This proved to be enough. The princes tightened their hold on the municipality and the watch committees, increased the forces at the disposal of the royal Provost of Paris and strengthened the guard placed about the King in the Hôtel Saint-Pol. A bungled attempt to provoke a rising in the butcheries and markets around Les Halles was suppressed without difficulty. Its main consequence was a fresh round of repression as suspected persons were rounded up to be mutilated, imprisoned or expelled. There was angry talk of purging the Dauphin's household of unsympathetic elements.[5]

In early October 1414 John the Fearless's representatives, Anthony of Brabant and Margaret of Hainaut, came before the court at Senlis accompanied by the delegates of the Four Members of Flanders to demand the implementation of the peace of Arras. They were put off with technical objections to their powers and told to come back to Senlis on 1 November.[6] But shortly before the appointed date the Armagnac princes carried out what amounted to a coup. On 23 October the Dauphin dismissed the unpopular Armagnac partisan whom the princes had installed as Provost of Paris and reinstated the man whom they had ousted the year before, his Breton Marshal Tanneguy du Châtel. This bold attempt to take control of the capital provoked an immediate response. That evening the Dauphin appears to have been kidnapped by partisans of the princes with the connivance of the Duke of Berry as he emerged from supper with the Duke at the Hôtel de Nesle. He was delivered to Arthur de Richemont and Philip of Orléans and smuggled out of the city on a small pony covered in a servant's cloak and accompanied by a few of his household staff. The young prince was taken first to Richemont's castle at Nemours and then to the Duke of Berry's castle at Mehun-sur-Yèvre in Berry where he remained under close guard for six weeks. Tanneguy's appointment as Provost was immediately rescinded by the Armagnac majority on the royal council and the princes' candidate reinstated. The conference at Senlis planned for 1 November was cancelled. By the

time the Dauphin returned to the capital in December the Armagnacs had recovered control of King, government and city. On 5 January 1415 they marked the triumph of their cause with a series of public ceremonies. A requiem Mass was held in Notre-Dame cathedral in honour of the murdered Duke of Orléans in the presence of the sick King at which Jean Gerson, now emerging as the chief propagandist of the house of Orléans, denounced the dead duke's murderers and their apologists and called for the public humiliation of the Duke of Burgundy. The Dauphin ostentatiously stayed away.[7]

The long-delayed conference to complete the peace of Arras did not open until 28 January 1415. By then the mood on both sides was angry and distrustful. John the Fearless made a crude attempt to overawe the proceedings by sending a small army under the command of the Marshal of Burgundy to occupy the walled town of Lagny on the Marne just east of Paris. The Armagnacs responded by changing the venue from Senlis to Saint-Denis, where they felt stronger and safer. As a result the Countess of Hainaut, who objected to the change, refused to attend in person and insisted on participating by messenger from Senlis. There was then a row about the composition of the Burgundian delegation. It included some banished former officers of the royal household to whose presence the Armagnacs took exception. When the negotiations finally began the Burgundian team was led by Anthony Duke of Brabant, together with John the Fearless's councillor Jean de Thoisy, Bishop of Tournai, and the delegates of the Four Members of Flanders. They opened with a written list of their demands, starting with a general amnesty for all those who had been banished for their support of John the Fearless and the Cabochians the previous summer. The Dauphin presided from the throne, but it soon became obvious that he was not a free agent. He was surrounded by Armagnac princes and bishops on the royal council. They loathed the Duke of Burgundy to a man and were determined to allow no debate in the face of the opposition. In keeping with this policy the Armagnac side declined to comment on the Burgundian demands. Instead they adjourned for ten days to discuss them among themselves in private. While the Burgundian delegates kicked their heels at Saint-Denis the Armagnacs on the royal council issued an ordinance in the King's name, without consultation or consent, which unilaterally imposed peace on their own terms. The ordinance roughly followed the open clauses agreed at Arras but offered only a highly qualified amnesty for John the Fearless's supporters. It excluded all those banished by due process of law and up to 500 other supporters of John's cause whose names would be disclosed in due course. In addition those of

John's allies and clients who had been dismissed from the households of the King, the Queen or the Dauphin or had fled from Paris were forbidden to come within twenty miles of the capital for at least two years. None of them would be entitled to recover their offices in the royal administration except at the discretion of the King. When the two sides reconvened on 7 February the Dauphin's new chancellor, Martin Gouges Bishop of Chartres, explained that the council had taken this course because of the 'evils without number' that had befallen the kingdom as a result of the activities of the Duke of Burgundy and his associates. A summary of the ordinance was read out and it was made clear that the Burgundians could take it or leave it. The Duke of Brabant was outraged. This 'strange answer', he said, was a plain breach of faith. He called for an audience with the King and the Dauphin. The representatives of the Four Members of Flanders added their own protests. The Armagnacs were unmoved.[8]

The Duke of Burgundy was furious when his ambassadors' report reached him in Burgundy a few days later. He resented the tone of the royal ordinance, which by stressing the King's mercy suggested that he had done something wrong. He objected to the exceptions from the amnesty, whose effect was to exclude the two groups on whom he was counting to recover power: the Cabochians and other Parisian radicals, and the victims of the Armagnac purges in the royal households and the civil service. At the most John was prepared to allow up to seven exceptions from the amnesty but no more. His ambassadors advised him to be more accommodating. But politically he could not afford to be. He would have lost his Parisian partisans if he had not been willing to stand up for their leaders.

Frustrated by the difficulties of conducting a delicate negotiation at a distance, John began to doubt the reliability of his ambassadors. He was afraid that they had been suborned by his enemies. He may have been right about this. The Duke of Brabant was being plied daily with hospitality and invited to parties and rackets matches. He felt at home at a court populated by political opponents who were also his cousins and friends. As for his fellow ambassador Margaret of Hainaut, her anger was being softened by the Duke of Berry, who travelled to Senlis to see her. John wrote a succession of letters warning them not to be seduced into conceding too much by the insidious affability of the Armagnacs. Unless the Dauphin and his Armagnac governors were prepared to yield, he told them, there could be no deal.[9]

The English ambassadors, the Bishops of Durham and Norwich, Thomas Beaufort Earl of Dorset and Richard lord Grey, had been in Paris since about the middle of January 1415. They had entered the

city discreetly with a small staff to negotiate an extension of the current truce which was about to expire. Comfortably installed in the Hôtel de Bourbon and the Hôtel de Navarre on the right bank, they were able to listen to the gossip of the streets and to follow developments at Saint-Denis. Their formal entry into the French capital was deferred to 9 February when it could be stage-managed with proper ceremony. It was an even grander affair than their previous entry in August. The streets of the city had been cleaned for days beforehand. The ambassadors appeared at the gates wearing silk and cloth of gold, accompanied by a cavalcade of 700 or 800 outriders and escorted by a throng of princes and dignitaries. There were jousts in the Rue Saint-Antoine and banquets at the Hôtel Saint-Pol. Behind the contrived noise and gaiety it was obvious that a major political crisis was brewing.[10]

In the Hôtel de Flandre a few hundred yards from Bishop Langley's lodgings, the Burgundian delegates at the conference of Saint-Denis were arguing among themselves. Their instructions from John the Fearless were to insist on a full amnesty for his followers even if it meant the end of the conference and the collapse of the peace. But the Armagnacs were refusing to yield. The Duke of Burgundy's permanent officials, led by Jean Thoisy, did not dare to defy their master's wishes. They wanted to send the current drafts to him and ask for further instructions. The Duke of Brabant and the Countess of Hainaut felt that they had a wider discretion. They were after all among John's closest kin and they were bargaining on their own standing as much as his. They were for cutting a deal now on the best terms they could get even if that meant abandoning the demand for a general amnesty. They were supported by the delegates of the Four Members of Flanders. Eventually the officials were won round. They explained their reasons later when they reported on their mission to the Duke.

The decisive factor, they said, was the threat from England. The truce with the English had been extended for just long enough to cover the current negotiations but was due to expire in May. Reports of the proceedings of the Westminster Parliament had by now reached Paris. Everyone knew about the double subsidy voted by the Commons and about Henry V's warlike preparations. But, as the Burgundian ambassadors pointed out, there were people about the King of France who hated the Duke of Burgundy even more than they feared the English. Their contacts had told them that Charles VI's council was on the point of agreeing a treaty with the English in order to be able to concentrate their forces against the house of Burgundy. To insure themselves against an English attack while they dealt with John the Fearless, the Armagnacs were ready not

only to agree to a marriage alliance but to cede a large part of the kingdom of France to Henry V. This would be a shameful thing, John's ambassadors thought, for which people would blame him. It would also be a political disaster. They believed that the Dauphin was genuinely anxious to heal the schism between Burgundy and Armagnac, but in a civil war he would become a powerless cipher in the hands of the princes. In all conscience John's ambassadors could not bring themselves to let the conference collapse in full view of Henry V's ambassadors. The Duke of Burgundy had always professed to be loyal to the King and the Dauphin. He now had to decide whether he meant it. They had therefore resolved to concede now. They could always renegotiate later when the situation was less critical. The Duke of Brabant was probably the only man who could have stood up to John the Fearless on a point like this.[11]

On 22 February 1415 the terms of peace between John the Fearless's ambassadors and the Armagnac government were finally settled at a long meeting in the Louvre. The terms were those of the royal ordinance. The Burgundian ambassadors made a formal declaration that they had only agreed under protest. But they agreed. The news was proclaimed to the sound of trumpets through the streets of Paris, which erupted with joy. The street parties continued through the night. On the following morning there was a *Te Deum* at Notre-Dame attended by the entire court and the delegates of both sides. John the Fearless only learned what had been done in his name after the event. Writing to his colleagues from Paris, the Duke of Burgundy's diplomatic secretary Thierry Gherbode remarked that the only people who did not share the general joy were the English ambassadors. In their negotiations with the French government the incipient threat of an Anglo-Burgundian alliance had been their strongest bargaining counter. Now John had ratified a treaty which bound him to renounce any prospect of such an alliance. Shortly, he thought, the English ambassadors would receive an answer to their demands which would displease them. For their part, the English could see that they had been outmanoeuvred. They felt that the French were laughing at them behind their hands.[12]

The negotiations of the French royal council with the English had proceeded in parallel with their dealings with the Duke of Brabant. They are not as well recorded but the outline is clear. The English had opened by repeating their extravagant demands of the previous August and the French had responded by repeating the offer made by the Duke of Berry on that occasion. A curious account in the record of a criminal trial for espionage some years later suggests that the main issue was about Normandy. An English clerk on the

ambassadors' staff is said to have got into conversation with a French lawyer in Notre-Dame cathedral. The Frenchman asked him how things were going. The Englishman replied that the King of France would do well to apply himself to his duty which was to restore to Henry V what was rightfully his. Normandy, this man said, had been held by William the Conqueror and taken from the English by Philip Augustus at the beginning of the thirteenth century without a shadow of right. The Frenchman was puzzled. It seemed to be a bit late, he said, to be complaining about the loss of Normandy two centuries ago. On the contrary, the Englishman replied, the English King was absolutely serious about it and the whole of the English realm was arrayed to make war on France unless it was conceded.

We do not know what were the terms that the Duke of Brabant was told were about to be agreed with the English. But there is no doubt that the English moderated their demands once the deal with John the Fearless cut the ground from under their feet. By the middle of March they had dropped the demand for Normandy and agreed in principle to a marriage between Henry V and Catherine of France, provided that the French ceded all the territories promised at Brétigny. These, they said, would have to include Poitou and Limousin, which had not been put on the table by the Duke of Berry the year before. Moreover they must be ceded in full sovereignty. And the young princess must come with a full trousseau and a dowry of 1,500,000 *écus* (down from the original demand for 2,000,000 *écus*). The French responded with an offer to throw in the Pyrenean county of Bigorre but not Poitou or Limousin. They also raised Catherine's dowry from 600,000 to 800,000 *écus*. But the English had no authority to make further concessions. On that note the negotiations came to an end. The two sides exchanged memoranda recording their positions.

At the last minute the Duke of Berry intervened to suggest that a French embassy should come to England in the spring with full authority to continue the negotiations. The English could hardly refuse. But neither side had any confidence in the outcome. The English delegation understood perfectly well that their real function was to justify Henry V's aggressive plans in the eyes of his own subjects. The French royal council also believed that the English King was bent on war anyway. On 13 March, the day that the negotiations broke down, they issued an ordinance imposing a *taille* of 600,000 *écus*, the second in as many years, for the defence of the realm against England. Forced loans were levied on wealthy churchmen and officials to finance the immediate reinforcement of the marches of Picardy and Gascony and the defence of the coast of

Normandy.[13]

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A month after the English ambassadors had left Paris the Dauphin succeeded in wresting power from the Armagnac cabal in control of his father's council. The first step to this end had been taken in February 1415 while attention had been concentrated on the conferences with the English and the Burgundians. Louis had finally succeeded at the third attempt in imposing his Marshal Tanneguy du Châtel as Provost of Paris. Having thus secured control of the Châtelet he had begun to plan his *coup d'état*. Arthur de Richemont, the Duke of Brittany's younger brother who controlled the main armed force in the capital, was won over. The blow fell in the second week of April. A council of all the princes then in Paris was summoned to the residence of the Queen in the castle of Melun on the Seine south of the city. On 9 April, leaving Isabelle to keep them occupied at Melun, the Dauphin secretly left for Paris with a handful of intimates and made for the Hôtel Saint-Pol. There he obtained letters from his half-demented father appointing him as captain of the Bastille. Richemont was appointed as his deputy and sent to take possession of the fortress. Tanneguy du Châtel took control of the rest of the city with a garrison of Breton troops. Three of the four *échevins* of Paris were dismissed and replaced by men in the Dauphin's confidence. The gates of the city were closed. From Paris the Dauphin wrote to each of the princes at Melun ordering them to leave at once for their domains and not to return to Paris except by the express invitation of the King or himself.

On 11 April 1415 Louis summoned the leading members of the municipality and the University to the Louvre. There he had an ordinance read out, issued that morning, in which he declared that he was taking personal control of the government. After Charles VI himself, he said, he 'alone and above all others' had the natural right to govern. No one was henceforth to claim to conduct the affairs of the kingdom without the permission of the King or himself and all appointments at court and in the civil service would in future be at his and his father's disposal. Following the reading his chancellor, Martin Gouges Bishop of Chartres, delivered a speech to the assembly. He summarised the whole political history of France since the minority of Charles VI, detailing the successive encroachments on the King's sovereignty by his uncles and then by his brother and the progressive destruction of the state in their private interest. All of this, the Bishop said, was now at an end. The Dauphin intended to restore the autonomy and powers of the Crown to their former state. On 26 April, a fortnight after the assembly, the

Dauphin had himself nominated as the King's Captain-General on all fronts with viceregal powers to confront the English wherever they might appear. For the rest of the year the eighteen-year-old Dauphin remained in more or less unchallenged control of the French government, assisted by a council dominated by ecclesiastics, professional administrators and a handful of military men: the loyal and determined Tanneguy du Châtel, the Constable Charles d'Albret and Arthur de Richemont, all of them instinctive supporters of whoever was in power. Charles VI no longer counted. By now he was barely capable of attending to business even during his periods of relative lucidity.[14]

The Dauphin had not disposed of the Armagnac princes only to put himself in the power of the Duke of Burgundy. Indeed relations between the young prince and his father-in-law became more glacial than ever as Louis marked his new-found independence by repudiating his gentle, plain wife Margaret of Burgundy, whom he had always found repellent, and sending her off to live in the castle of Saint-Germain-en-Laye west of Paris while he set up with one of his mother's ladies-in-waiting. Politically John the Fearless's latest agreement with the royal house proved to be as superficial as all the other solemn treaties designed to put an end to the divisions of France. As Thierry Gherbode had foreseen when the agreement was made, the threatened English invasion would be its undoing. That is certainly how John himself saw it. When the royal commissioners came before him to administer the oath to abide by the new treaty he refused to swear it until the question of the amnesty had been resolved to his satisfaction. It was, in effect, a repudiation of his brother's seal on the agreement. The Duke's ambassadors came before the Dauphin in Paris in July to explain his reasons. They were brutally frank. 'With respect, most noble lord,' they said, 'you must understand that unless you concede what our master has asked of you neither he nor his vassals or subjects will lift a finger to help when the English set upon you.'[15]

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The English ambassadors returned home at the end of March 1415 to a country in the midst of noisy preparations for war. Henry V did not have the luxury of awaiting the outcome of the negotiations even if he had been inclined to. An expeditionary army on the vast scale envisaged required a long lead time. At about the end of January the King had presided over a conference of the major English shipping towns to review the arrangements for transporting his army to France. The King's ships at the Tower of London were ordered to be crewed and commissioned for war service. The ships

of the Cinque Ports were called out. In early April orders were given to requisition all ships of more than twenty tons burden in every English port from Newcastle to Bristol. By 1415 the English merchant marine had recovered from its nadir in the reign of Richard II. But it was still a long way below the levels of the mid-fourteenth century and there could be no question of relying on England's resources alone. Richard Clitheroe, a rich London merchant with years of experience of supplying royal armies and organising transports, was sent on two missions to charter ships in the ports of Holland and Zeeland under the complaisant gaze of the Duke of Burgundy's brother-in-law, William Count of Holland and Hainaut. Henry V made no secret of the object of these preparations. On 10 March he told the aldermen of the city of London that he was preparing to invade France. By the time that the Bishops of Durham and Norwich reported on their mission, Henry V was already well past the point of no return.[16]

A great council opened at Westminster on 16 April 1415. The opening speech was delivered by Chancellor Beaufort. He went through the history of the negotiations to date but made no attempt to conceal the fact that the King's mind was made up. He reminded them of their advice the previous October to explore every diplomatic avenue before embarking on war. Henry had now done that, but 'for want of justice on the other side' no agreement had been possible. He therefore intended to obtain his due by force of arms. He would invade France in the summer either by way of Gascony or by the north. It was his brother Thomas Beaufort Earl of Dorset, himself one of the ambassadors, who acted as spokesman of the forty-three lords spiritual and temporal who were present, promising their support for the enterprise. The assembly sat for three days to approve the arrangements for the recruitment of the army and the defence of England in the King's absence. The troops were ordered to muster at Southampton on 1 July with a view to sailing for France by 1 August. The King envisaged that the campaign might last for up to a year.[17]

The details were discussed at Westminster over the last ten days of April once the great council had closed. By the end of the month almost all the captains had entered into indentures for the service of their companies. The King's presence at the head of the army was a powerful recruiting agent. It brought out the mass of the nobility and gentry who had been trained as men-at-arms but were not professional soldiers and served mainly for honour. They included no fewer than forty-three dukes, earls and barons, the highest proportion of the Parliamentary peerage to serve in any campaign of the fifteenth century. The total indentured service was more than

12,000 combatants. In addition there were more than 600 masons, miners, carpenters, fletchers, armourers, tentmakers and other artificers, as well as the clerks and chaplains of the King's household, and, for the first time in an English campaign, a corps of surgeons. These figures suggest a total armed strength of at least 15,000 mounted men when armed servants accompanying the men-at-arms are taken into account. The indentures allowed for the carriage of sixteen horses for a baron, six for a knight, four for a squire and one for an archer. These allowances, which were larger than usual, indicated a total of more than 20,000 horses including baggage animals. It would be one of the largest expeditionary armies which the English had ever landed in France, comparable to the great hosts which had accompanied Edward III in 1346 and 1359. Over the next three months the admirals requisitioned substantially the whole of the ocean-going merchant marine, about 300 sailing ships including 125 large cogs. No fewer than 700 hulls were chartered by Clitheroe in the Low Countries at a cost of nearly £10,000.[18]

The King was silent about the exact destination of his army. According to the chaplain who accompanied him on the campaign and later wrote the history of the expedition, Henry shared the secret only with his closest councillors.[19] The rest were left guessing by a deliberate campaign of deception. The indentures declared that the army would go either to Gascony or to some unidentified point in northern France and specified different rates depending on which was chosen. When the first instalment of the advances was paid in early June, it was paid at the higher Gascon rates. But Henry V had never intended to land in Gascony. His objective was Normandy, where he intended to seize the port of Harfleur. Harfleur was the principal Atlantic port of France, a major base for French warships and the chief centre of French privateering. But there were wider and perhaps more important strategic considerations than these. Possession of Harfleur was seen as the solution to one of the perennial problems of English strategy in France. The great west-flowing rivers, the Somme, the Seine, the Loire and their many tributaries, provided formidable barriers to an invader trying to move north or south through France. Calais was easily accessible from England. But it was too far from the political heart of France in the valleys of the Seine and the Loire and separated from them by successive river barriers; while Bordeaux, although lying at the head of all the main river systems of the south-west, was too far from England for a large army to reach it by sea. The English had never succeeded in sending more than about 4,000 men there, chiefly because of the shortage of ships big enough to make the long

passage past the Ushant reef and across the Bay of Biscay. Harfleur by comparison occupied a commanding position on the north side of the Seine estuary. As an Aragonese ambassador later explained to his government, it was the 'gateway to the Seine valley and the route to Paris and most of France'.[20]

Henry's broader objectives once he had taken Harfleur are less clear. The chaplain believed that his first objective would be 'to recover his duchy of Normandy, which had belonged by rights to his crown since the time of William I'. This is certainly consistent with everything that he said and did when he got there. But Henry was a realist and his policy at this stage was probably still the traditional policy of Edward III and Richard II. Like them he intended to strike in the north with a view to bargaining for concessions in the south-west. Shortly after the great council had dispersed Henry directed Bishop Courtenay to have notarised transcriptions made of the treaty of May 1412 with the Armagnac princes, by which his father had been offered all the territories ceded to Edward III at Brétigny in 1360. Before leaving for France he had this document sent as a statement of his just claims to the German King Sigismund and to the council of the Latin Church currently sitting at Constance. For the moment the reinstatement of the Brétigny terms would probably still have satisfied him.[21]

Henry's preparations of 1415 reflected much serious thought about the past and future of English warfare in France. The most striking feature of the army's recruitment was the exceptionally high proportion of archers, about four-fifths of the payroll strength. This marked a sharp acceleration of a long-standing trend. The ratio of archers to men-at-arms in English armies in France had progressively increased throughout the fourteenth century from one to every two men-at-arms at the outset of the Anglo-French wars in the 1330s to one for one by the 1380s. The army which invaded France under the Duke of Clarence in 1412 had had three archers to every man-at-arms and the same ratio was called for in the indentures of 1415.[22] But the proportion of archers was deliberately boosted to something like four to one by the recruitment of all-archer companies in Chester, Lancashire and north Wales. Archers were cheaper and more plentiful than trained men-at-arms, factors which no doubt contributed something to the change. But the main reason for it appears to have been tactical. Recent experience in Wales and in the civil wars in England had all underlined the importance of archers in raids, sieges and battles alike.

Advancing technology had deprived the longbow of some of its advantages. With the introduction of the steel crossbow at the end of the fourteenth century it no longer had the advantage of range

which it had enjoyed at the time of Crécy. Articulated plate armour, made of relatively light hardened steel with curved surfaces to deflect arrowheads, conferred far better protection against arrows than chain mail. But steel crossbows were not yet common in France and the higher grades of plate were expensive and still comparatively rare. Even those who had it were generally unwilling to sacrifice mobility and vision by encasing themselves in it entirely. The face, thighs and joints remained vulnerable. On the battlefield the longbow was still king. Its main advantage was its speed of fire. A skilled archer could shoot up to ten times in the time required to reload a crossbow, a slow and awkward operation generally performed with a stirrup and a windlass. Arrowheads were redesigned with narrow steel tips and cutting edges bedded into an iron core, thus achieving a high degree of penetration at short range even against plate armour. Tactically, massed longbowmen, skilfully deployed in large numbers, remained a devastating arm of war. Battlefield archaeology and chronicle accounts suggest that dense and constant volleys of arrows from large bodies of bowmen were responsible for appalling injuries on the battlefield and caused havoc among lightly protected warhorses. For the next forty years the longbow was to have an even larger place in the English way of war than it had done in the previous century. The power of England, as Sir John Fortescue would say in the next generation, 'stondeth most uppon upon our pouere archers'.[23]

The two main instruments of English warfare in France in the fourteenth century had been the *chevauchée*, a powerful long-distance mounted raid accompanied by the deliberate destruction of the country; and the occupation of fortresses, sometimes by royal garrisons but generally by irregular bands of *routiers* acting in the King's name, who controlled a limited area around their walls, often including important pinch points on the great road and river arteries. Both of these techniques had a common objective. They were intended to force the French government to terms by fear: fear of fire, rapine and looting; fear of political humiliation when the Crown's inability to defend its subjects was exposed; fear of large-scale regional defections by men frightened of losing their land. Both techniques had been consistently unsuccessful. The great tidal waves of destruction associated with the *chevauchées* had crashed over the provinces of France before receding to allow life gradually to resume its traditional patterns. They rarely produced a durable shift of loyalties. The *routier* companies had inflicted more persistent hardships on the rural population. But their operations had been episodic, incoherent and, after 1369, largely confined to the south-west. The weakness of English strategy in the fourteenth century

had been the inability of English commanders to occupy territory apart from the isolated coastal barbicans of Calais, Cherbourg and Brest. Henry V had studied the campaigns of Edward III. He followed him too often for it to be a coincidence. But he did not follow him in this. He did not intend the expedition of 1415 to be a mere raid, however destructive. He planned to seize and occupy territory with a view to permanently weakening the French state and undermining its capacity to resist his demands. Few things symbolised the change of strategy as eloquently as the King's artillery train. Artillery in the fifteenth century was primarily a siege weapon and it was for a war of sieges that the English King was preparing.

Gunpowder artillery was hardly new. It had been introduced into Europe, probably from China, at about the beginning of the fourteenth century and the Kings of England had been among the first to use it. But early guns had been relatively light pieces mounted on the walls of fortresses, and occasionally on ships, and firing metal bolts or pellets. They were designed for use against men rather than masonry. Richard II's household accounts record that he acquired at least eighty-seven cannon in the course of his reign but the largest of them weighed only about a third of a ton and the standard model was half of that. In the last quarter of the fourteenth century significant advances in the technique of metal casting had made it possible to build much larger pieces ('bombards') with a bigger calibre and longer range for use against the fixed defences of castles and towns. By the beginning of the fifteenth century Christine de Pisan speaks of bombards firing projectiles as large as 500 pounds, more than matching the traditional timber trebuchets powered by torsion or counterweights which had been used in one form or another since Roman times. The new weapons were transforming siege warfare, depriving stout walls and garrisons of the advantage over field armies that they had enjoyed for centuries. Deployed by the Dukes of Burgundy, who were the great pioneers of late medieval siege artillery, these monsters in cast bronze and later in cast iron weighed up to five tons and could hurl huge cut-stone balls for more than a thousand yards against walls and towers with devastating moral and physical effect, as the Armagnac defenders of Ham, Dun-le-Roi and Bourges had learned to their cost. It would be a century or more before changes in the design of fixed defences originating in Renaissance Italy restored the traditional advantages of the defence in European warfare.[24]

These important developments had so far passed the English by. This was partly because a war of sieges would have required them to keep their armies in the field for longer periods, something which

was generally beyond their financial resources. And it was partly because of the formidable logistical problems involved in moving the larger artillery pieces. In 1409 the Duke of Burgundy's great cannon of Auxonne, which weighed three and a half tons and fired a ball of more than 700 pounds, had to be hauled overland in an iron-framed cart by thirty-two oxen and thirty-one horses at three miles a day. For longer distances the only option was river transport with the weapons strapped to tree trunks laid over two large barges.[25] This was only possible for a power which controlled the open country and the principal watercourses. It was out of the question for English mounted armies in France, which passed rapidly through contested territory without controlling it. Largely for these reasons the English had tended to shun siege warfare and were ill-equipped for the few major sieges that they attempted. In 1376 and 1377 the French had used bombards to great effect against the English-held fortress of Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte in Normandy, but the English deployed none in their only major siege of the period at Nantes in 1381.

After Richard II's death Henry IV had taken a fresh interest in siege artillery and acquired a small number of bombards. He used them with impressive results against the Percy castles of the north in 1405 and later, with rather less success, against Glendower's strongholds at Harlech and Aberystwyth. One of them is known to have weighed two tons. But his artillery was primitive by comparison with the products of the major arsenals of France and the Low Countries. Judging by the frequency with which they disintegrated in use his guns were crudely manufactured pieces with barrels made from wrought iron staves butt-joined and bound together with hoops rather than cast in a single piece like the mightier weapons in use on the Continent.

The decision to occupy Normandy in 1415 forced the English to address these deficiencies. Advances in siege artillery cut short the resistance of towns and made it possible for the first time to contemplate a rapid campaign of sieges. The logistical problems of transporting heavy equipment made it necessary to occupy territory, especially river valleys. Henry V prepared an imposing siege train in 1415 including twelve 'great cannons'. But his efforts betrayed England's limited experience with artillery. Although there were some pieces in cast bronze the bigger ones were still being made from wrought iron staves. And although the new pieces were manufactured in England, the King was dependent on foreign specialists to operate them. In 1415 five of his master gunners, twenty-five journeymen and fifty assistants were recruited in the Low Countries or Gascony.[26]

The ambitious scale of these plans entailed a large financial commitment. Warfare had always been expensive and was becoming more so. The political tumults of the previous century had deprived the English Crown of some of its peremptory powers. It could no longer seize its subjects' victuals and war materials for nominal compensation. It could no longer claim military service at the expense of the county communities. It had been forced to pay hire for requisitioned ships. The Treasury now had to accumulate large sums in cash in advance of any campaign. Henry V devoted a personal attention to his finances unmatched since the reign of Edward I. He drastically reduced the number of assignments on revenue collectors, thus greatly increasing the proportion of his revenues received in cash at the Exchequer. At the same time he boosted his revenues by the ruthless exploitation of his demesne and his prerogative rights. He reformed the administration of his lands, increasing the revenues derived from Wales, Chester, Cornwall and the duchy of Lancaster. He single-mindedly pursued opportunistic gains: he sold pardons for past offences on a large scale; he charged large sealing fees for royal charters; he levied heavy fines on royal wards and the widows of tenants-in-chief for the right to marry whom they chose, £10,000 in the notorious case of Edmund Mortimer Earl of March, who understandably concluded that the King was out to ruin him. Annuities and pensions, the millstone that had burdened his father's finances throughout his reign, were halved. Bad debts, another abiding problem of the previous reign, were reduced to comparatively modest proportions. The effect of these measures was to restore the King's credit and to enable him to borrow on a much increased scale and for longer periods.[27]

Even so, financing an expedition on this scale severely tested the English government's resources. In February 1415, when detailed planning of the campaign was beginning, the Treasurer was charged to prepare a statement of the King's revenues, expenses and debts 'so that he can set forth with a clear conscience as a prince of sound government and the better accomplish his expedition to the pleasure of God and the satisfaction of his subjects'. The opaque accounting system of the English medieval state made the preparation of this document a major enterprise. When it finally appeared in June it estimated the King's net ordinary revenues at about £55,000 for the year to 24 June, of which about 85 per cent came from the customs. The total cost of the defence of England was reckoned at about £39,000. Of this some £21,000 was accounted for by defence of Calais alone and another £9,500 by garrisons on the march of Scotland and in Wales and Ireland and by the defence of the coasts and sea lanes. This left a theoretical

surplus of some £16,000 for offensive operation. In fact the surplus was illusory. It was entirely consumed by expenses which turned out to be greater than expected, such as the wages of the Calais garrison, or were omitted altogether, like the royal household and the horde of annuitants and salaried officials.[28]

The army of 1415 would cost about £45,000 a quarter, not including shipping. This would have to be funded entirely from extraordinary sources, mainly Parliamentary taxation. The first instalment of the double subsidy voted by Parliament in November brought in about £50,000 including the matching grants of the two convocations of the clergy. This was just enough to fund the first quarter. The rest would have to be borrowed. On 19 June the council authorised the Treasurer to start issuing assignments to creditors. Significant sums were borrowed on the security of Exchequer tallies over the following weeks. About £18,300 was borrowed in cash between June and September from English and Italian merchants in London and wealthy noblemen and prelates. Another £6,600 was found from the King's personal resources. Chancellor Beaufort alone lent nearly £2,000. The London merchants John Hende and Richard Whittington, both long-standing lenders to the Crown, found another £1,600 between them. Muscular pressures were applied to less willing lenders. Royal commissioners toured the country with blank letters under the privy seal pressing town corporations, churchmen and moneyed laymen for loans on the implicit and sometimes explicit threat that the King's favour would be withdrawn if they were not forthcoming. Chancellor Beaufort came to the Guildhall in person with an intimidating entourage, including the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Dukes of Bedford, Gloucester and York, to induce the Corporation of London to lend 10,000 marks (£6,666). The representatives of the big trading houses of Florence, Lucca and Venice, who had ignored gentler requests, were summoned to Blackfriars to be asked for £2,400 and reminded how much the King's protection was worth to their businesses. When they still refused they were committed to the Flete prison until they changed their minds.[29]

By far the largest group of creditors, however, were the nobility and the captains serving in the army. War wages were traditionally payable quarterly in advance. The first quarter's wages were due up front in cash before embarkation, half upon signing their indentures and half upon mustering at the port. The Chancellor had frankly told the assembled magnates at the great council of April that the first quarter's wages would exhaust the first part of the double subsidy voted by Parliament. The magnates had agreed that the

army would serve on credit for the second quarter, and this arrangement was in practice imposed on all the captains, including those who had not been present at the great council. It was tantamount to £30,000 or more of further borrowing. Most of the more influential creditors and almost all the soldiers took pledges of the King's jewellery and plate. The King's chapels and treasuries were ransacked to find objects worth pawning, from masterpieces of the jewellers' art valued at £10,000 or more to the chalices and lecterns of the King's chapels at Westminster and Windsor and even the kitchen utensils. The Duke of Clarence, with the largest company in the army after the King's, took the great crown of Henry IV and broke off its gold fleurons and precious stones to pledge to his retainers as security for their own wages. Treasures which had remained untouched even in the dire financial crises of the previous reign were taken out of store to be pawned for money or service. They included the elaborate jewellery from the treasury of Castile pledged by Pedro the Cruel to the Black Prince more than half a century before and the gifts presented to John of Gaunt by John I of Castile, along with costly artefacts from the hoards of Charles VI and Louis of Orléans and their uncles which they had presented in happier times to Richard II. That left the third quarter, which was to be paid in arrears from the second Parliamentary subsidy, due in February 1416. No arrangements at all were made for paying the fourth quarter whose financing was left to providence.[30]

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The departure of the promised French embassy was delayed by the Dauphin's *coup d'état*. On 12 April 1415, Dorset Herald arrived in the French capital with a letter from Henry V pressing the French government to nominate its ambassadors. It was shortly followed by another in which the English King complained about the length of time which the French apparently expected to spend in England. 'Delay is the enemy of peace,' he said. But the reality, as Henry knew, was that delay was also the enemy of war. He had no intention of allowing diplomacy to unwind the spring that he had coiled. The patent insincerity of his call for more talks must have been obvious to the French, who were receiving detailed and accurate reports about the English King's preparations. But on the approach of any great war those threatened have a way of taking refuge in wishful thinking. Judging by his son's chronicle even the King's councillor Jean Jouvenel professed to find 'humble' and 'gracious' sentiments in the English King's letters, although he had been among the first Frenchmen to realise with appalled fascination

what a formidable personality his countrymen were now up against.[31]

On 16 April 1415, just days after his takeover of power, the Dauphin presided over a council meeting to discuss the coming crisis with England. They resolved upon a last-ditch attempt to stop the coming invasion. In spite of the poor auguries the decision to send a new embassy to England was confirmed. In May a great council gathered in Paris to consider the ambassadors' instructions. The Duke of Berry was allowed to return to the capital to give it the benefit of his half a century of experience of dealing with France's 'ancient enemy'. Seven notable emissaries were nominated. Their leader and spokesman was Jean de Berry's chancellor, Guillaume de Boisratier Archbishop of Bourges, who had led the embassy of December 1413. His colleagues included Pierre Fresnel Bishop of Lisieux, whose experience of English and Scottish affairs went back more than thirty years; the Master of the Royal Household Louis Count of Vendôme; one of the Dauphin's household officers, Charles lord of Ivry; and the indispensable Gontier Col, who has left us one of the most graphic accounts of a great diplomatic occasion to survive from the middle ages. On 4 June they rode out of Paris with the usual cavalcade of men-at-arms, clerks, heralds and servants, some 350 mounted men altogether. None of them can have been optimistic about the outcome of their mission. Behind them in Paris plans were being made to recruit troops throughout the realm. In Calais humbler diplomatic agents were negotiating with Philip Morgan an extension of the truce to cover the embassy's time in England. The English agreed to extend it to 15 July but no further. This was just two weeks before the projected sailing date of Henry V's expedition.[32]

The French ambassadors landed at Dover on 17 June 1415. Henry V had appointed Winchester as the venue for the negotiations. It was an unprepossessing place in the early fifteenth century, in an advanced state of physical and economic decay but conveniently close to the designated embarkation points in the Solent. On 30 June the French were received a mile outside the town by Bishops Langley and Courtenay and the Earls of Dorset and Salisbury and were taken straight to the King. He received them in the hall of Wolvesey castle, the old twelfth-century mansion of the bishops of Winchester, fragments of which can still be seen in the south-east angle of the city walls. It was a brief and contrived occasion. Henry stood at the far end of the hall dressed from head to toe in cloth of gold with his three brothers, Clarence, Bedford and Gloucester, and a crowd of noblemen, bishops and officials. The Frenchmen presented him with personal letters from Charles VI and

the Duke of Berry. He enquired after the French King's health. Then he invited them to share the traditional peace offering of wine and spices before dismissing them. On the following morning the French delegation attended a grandiose Mass sung by twenty-eight chaplains, followed by a public audience entirely given over to formal business. Archbishop Boisratier delivered a learned and eloquent speech on the virtues of peace, filled with professions of goodwill. Chancellor Beaufort replied with another, barbed with the observation that the ambassadors had come very late in the day and would have to get the business done quickly.[33]

If these professions of impatience were designed to make the French feel uncomfortable it is clear that they succeeded. But their situation would never have been easy. Few if any of them spoke English. They were surrounded by the evidence of warlike preparations and very conscious of the hostility of those around them. They ate and slept under the same roof in the buildings of the Franciscan house by the crumbling north wall of the city, under the stern gaze of Archbishop Boisratier. He told them repeatedly not to wander about outside their lodgings, not to mix with the English, not get involved in street fights, arguments or indiscreet conversations and on no account to discuss the internal divisions of France in public. The Archbishop suspected that one of his suite, who made a habit of talking to Englishmen and was frequently absent from the common meal, was spying for the enemy. Unwelcome rumours destroyed their peace of mind: that a herald of the Duke of Burgundy had been seen in the passages of Wolvesey castle, that Henry V's armada was due to sail in twenty-four hours, that the King had already ordered his horses.[34]

In spite of the evident impatience of the English the business of the embassy did not really begin until 2 July when the principals and their main advisers gathered in the chapel of Wolvesey castle. The English Chancellor suggested that rather than beat about the bush the French should go straight to their best offer. The delay to date, he said, had already disrupted the King's military plans (this was untrue), and they had only till the following Saturday, 6 July, to reach agreement. Their safe-conducts expired on the 7th. Boisratier replied that they had already made generous offers which they had recorded in writing in the memorandum handed to the English at the close of the talks in Paris. Beaufort replied that that was not good enough. The English had stated their demands on the same occasion and had no intention of departing from any of them. A notebook was produced in which the competing statements of March were set out. Beaufort read out the French offers followed by the note at the end of the document recording that the French King

would send ambassadors to England who would have important declarations to make on his behalf. Now was the time to make them, he said. Boisratier replied that they would make more generous offers in due course but suggested that they should start with the question of Catherine of France's dowry. The rest of that day and the whole of the next was given over to haggling about the dowry while the English tried in vain to bring the discussion round to the territorial concessions which were of much greater interest to them. It was only on 4 July, after agreement had been reached upon a dowry of 850,000 *écus*, that this subject was considered. For the French the whole question of territorial concessions (or 'justice' as the English called it) was so sensitive that only three of them, Boisratier himself, the Count of Vendôme and the lord of Ivry, were authorised to discuss it and then only with the King himself. The King, surrounded by his brothers and a host of bishops and noblemen, received them later that morning in the Bishop of Winchester's chamber. Archbishop Boisratier disclosed that in addition to the territories which the Duke of Berry had offered to cede in August 1414 and the previous March they were prepared to add the whole of the Limousin including the area of Bas-Limousin around Tulle but not Jean de Berry's own county of Poitou. This represented a deal roughly comparable to the one offered to Richard II in 1393, which had been rejected by Parliament because of the problem of sovereignty. Boisratier pointed out that it was a generous offer. It comprised fifteen cathedral cities and seven counties of France. Several members of Charles VI's council had been reluctant to go so far, regarding the previous offers as quite generous enough. The English were not satisfied. Echoing the misgivings of Parliament in 1394 they wanted to know by what tenure their King was to hold these provinces. Were they to be held in full sovereignty? Or as a fief of France? The French ambassadors must have been prepared for this question. It was the issue on which every major Anglo-French conference before 1396 had broken down. But they had no clear answer to it. The English King went into a huddle with his advisers and kinsmen at one end of the room. There was a long discussion between them. Finally he called the French forward and told them that he would need longer to think about it. They would have his reply that afternoon after dinner.[35]

In fact they had to wait for two days. This may have been because Henry was genuinely thinking of accepting the French offer. But the sequel suggests that he was simply playing a part for the benefit of a wider audience. At nine o'clock on 6 July 1415, the last day allowed for the conference, the French ambassadors arrived

at Wolvesey castle. It was a long day. They were met by Bishops Langley and Courtenay and taken into a ground-floor chamber in the palace. An alternative proposal was being considered, the bishops explained: a long truce, at least forty years and possibly fifty, during which the English would occupy the ceded provinces while the parties negotiated a permanent peace and dealt with thorny issues like sovereignty. If the truce expired before a permanent treaty had been agreed the provinces would be returned to France. If their authority did not extend to such a deal Henry was prepared to put off his expedition by a month while the ambassadors stayed in England and one of his confidential clerks went to Paris to discuss it with the French royal council. Meanwhile the English King wanted to be sure that any agreement would be performed promptly. He needed an assurance that the princess, the first instalment of her dowry and the ceded provinces would all to be in his hands by the end of September.

These proposals, which had not been raised before, put the French in a quandary. They had no authority to agree to them and objected to being held in England for another month while the negotiations were transferred to Paris. They must also have had the strongest doubts about whether the French royal council would ever agree to surrender a third of France to the King of England without an assurance of permanent peace. As for the timetable, it was impossible. Just coining the bullion to pay the dowry would take until the end of the year.

Langley and Courtenay left at intervals to report to the King. Chancellor Beaufort came in and out. Finally, towards the end of the morning, the French ambassadors were brought before the King in an upper room to explain their position to him directly. Henry withdrew to confer with his council, leaving the ambassadors alone. These deliberations continued for the rest of the morning and throughout the afternoon while the French waited. At the beginning of the afternoon the King interrupted his council meeting for dinner in the bishop's parliament chamber and the French joined him there. Boisratier and Fresnel ate a tense meal sitting alone with the King at high table, while the rest of assembly ate in the body of the room. They noticed that Henry was dressed as if he was about to leave, with boots and spurs and a short riding tunic. But Henry's councillors came in and out of their room throughout the day to reassure them that all was well.

In the evening the ambassadors were summoned into the great hall of the palace. Entering the hall followed by their entourage, they found it packed with people. The King was seated on a throne at the far end flanked by bishops on one side and his brothers and

the principal noblemen of the army on the other. A throng of soldiers and dignitaries lined the walls, among whom they recognised the ambassadors of the Kings of Germany and Aragon and a herald in the livery of the Duke of Burgundy. The session had obviously been set up for show. Archbishop Chichele began to speak in Latin. He recited the history of the embassies exchanged between England and France since Henry V's accession. He criticised the vagueness of the promises which the French had made. He accused them of equivocating about the basis on which the King would hold the ceded provinces and about the question of timing. The King of England, Chichele said, had made extraordinary concessions. He had not insisted on his right to the crown of France. He had been ready to give up his claims to Normandy, Maine, the Loire provinces and the overlordship of Brittany and Flanders. But the French response suggested that for their part they had never been sincere. Henry had been denied justice. He therefore proposed to enter France and recover his own by force. Archbishop Chichele's discourse had been written out in advance. Copies were handed to the French ambassadors and to others present. According to one late but well-informed source Boisratier, angry and humiliated, asked the King in French if he might reply. Henry told him that he could speak frankly and he did. 'My lord, our sovereign lord is the true King of France and you have no right to any of the things that you claim,' he said, 'Our sovereign lord could never safely make a treaty with you anyway, for you are no King even in England but merely one claimant jostling for position with the true heirs of the late King Richard.' Henry, furious at being answered back in the midst of such a gathering, dismissed them. Outside, the sun was setting and as the ambassadors left for their lodgings they saw the King mounting his horse and riding out through the city gate.[36]

The French were profoundly shocked by Henry V's treatment of their embassy. They had made golden offers to him, offers which only their divisions and the parlous condition of their country could justify. They could not believe that he had spurned them. If they had ever scoffed at Henry V, they had long ago ceased to do so. But Boisratier's parting shot had touched on a sensitive nerve. It reflected deeply embedded prejudices about the English dynasty dating back to 1399. As an intelligent observer in Archbishop Boisratier's entourage pointed out to one of their English escorts on the road back to Dover, Henry V had dynastic rivals in his own country. He had heard gossip among the English about the superior claims of the Earl of March and even the Duke of Clarence. Marrying a French princess would surely have brought him legitimacy. What would war achieve by comparison? If he were to

maintain himself in France for two or three months he would invite defeat, for the French were the more experienced soldiers. If he scuttled back to England after a brief raid like so many English armies of the fourteenth century, he would achieve nothing of value and win no credit at home. Either way he risked the fate of Richard II, the last king to take his army out of England. Quite a few Englishmen would have made the same assessment. The King's councillor Henry Scrope of Masham was one of them. He was deeply pessimistic about the prospects of the campaign. 'The King is undone whether he goes or stays,' he was heard to say.[37]

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A few days after the ambassadors had returned to France the sudden disclosure of a plot against the King's life appeared to give substance to these fears. The man behind it was Richard of York Earl of Cambridge, the younger brother of Edward Duke of York and Henry V's first cousin. The house of York was a diminished clan which had lost much of its former wealth and power after the Lancastrian coup of 1399. Richard himself was a man of high status but few assets and no influence, a corrosive combination in the ambitious world of late medieval England. He had been created Earl of Cambridge in the Leicester Parliament of May 1414. But the title merely mocked his poverty, for contrary to tradition he had received no endowment to support the honour. By his own admission 'poverty and covetousness' were also the main motives of his only notable English collaborator Sir Thomas Gray of Heton, a Northumberland landowner perennially on the edge of insolvency.

Their plan was to kidnap Murdoch Stewart, a state prisoner who was due to be moved from the Tower of London to Berwick, and then to trade him for the support of his father the Duke of Albany. Richard of York had already made contact with Albany and claimed that he had agreed in principle to hand over in exchange for Murdoch the Percy heir, who had been living in Scotland since his grandfather's rebellion of 1405, as well as the notorious Thomas Ward of Trumpington who claimed to be Richard II. It was hoped that their names would raise the north of England. At the same time there were plans to raise a fresh rebellion among the former supporters of Owen Glendower and the Lollard followers of that other notable fugitive Sir John Oldcastle. Glendower had not been heard of for more than a year and by this time was probably dead. But tensions persisted and some of his partisans were still active. The conspirators planned to carry the Earl of March off to Wales and proclaim him King of England. They proposed to crown him with the Pallett of Spain, a helmet with a coronet on top that had

been pledged to Richard of York to secure the wages of his company in France. A draft proclamation was prepared against 'Harry of Lancaster, usurper of England'. The conspirators claimed a certain amount of support in Yorkshire and north Wales. But it is unlikely that they had as much backing as they believed even in these regions. Richard of York liked to talk big and some of those whom he approached for support were deliberately equivocal, neither promising nor refusing their participation until they knew which way the wind was blowing. Henry Scrope of Masham, one of the King's most influential councillors, appears to have been one of these. He was scathing about the plan when he was told about it. If the rebels took the field they would be defeated, he said; if they fled to Wales they would starve and if they took to the sea they would be captured. He did nothing to assist the plot. But neither did he disclose it to anyone else.[38]

These poorly conceived plans went wrong from the start. Murdoch was captured by an accomplice of Richard of York near Leeds at the end of June but recaptured a week later. Then, as the preparations for the King's expedition approached completion, Richard of York was not ready. According to Sir Thomas Gray, the Earl consulted Scrope about the possibility of forcing a postponement of the expedition by burning part of the fleet. 'It is best to break this voyage if it might be done,' he said. Finally the Earl of March, who had been persuaded at a late stage to cooperate, got cold feet. On 31 July he approached the King privately in Porchester castle near Portsmouth and revealed the whole business.

March's revelations must have aroused all the latent insecurity from which Henry V had suffered since his accession. A council meeting was called that evening. Richard of York, Thomas Gray and Henry Scrope were arrested as they arrived and taken to Southampton castle, where all of them made full confessions. Gray was convicted of treason after a perfunctory trial on 2 August and beheaded outside the gates of Southampton. Three days later, on 5 August, a special commission of nineteen peers assisted by two professional judges convicted Richard of York of treasonably planning the King's death. Scrope was not charged with participating in the plot but his closeness to the King and his membership of the Order of the Garter doomed him. The sense of betrayal was too strong. He was convicted on the ground that he had 'assented' to the plot and failed to reveal it to the King. Both men went to their deaths on the same day.

The executions created a sensation in England. It was natural in the mood of heightened tension that preceded the King's expedition for people to speculate about French involvement. There were

reports that Scrope had accepted money from Archbishop Boisratier's embassy. But the reports were baseless. It is possible that Charles VI's ministers had some idea of what was afoot, for two former councillors of Owen Glendower had been canvassing support in Paris earlier in the year. But the French King's councillors had grown wary of involvement in England's domestic differences and were no longer in a position to intervene even if they had wished to.[39]

On 7 August 1415 Henry V boarded his flagship the *Trinity Royal,* a tall cog with a painted leopard prow recently built for the King at Greenwich. At 540 tons burden and carrying a crew of 200 it was then the largest ship in England. The *Trinity Royal* hoisted her main yard to half-mast as the signal for the rest of the fleet to gather from the dispersed inlets and anchorages of the Solent. The couriers of the Venetian trading houses and the London agent of the city of Bordeaux, who had excellent sources at court and in the London mercantile world, suggested that the King had about 1,000 ships. This would have been enough, judging by past experience. Indeed it may have been more than enough, for according to the chaplain's chronicle of the campaign about 100 ships were left behind. His figure for the army, at 12,100 men, corresponds very closely to the payroll strength recorded in the indentures and pay records. With the mass of pages, servants, artificers and administrative staff the armada must have carried between 15,000 and 18,000 men in addition to some 22,000 seamen. On 11 August the whole fleet sailed out of the Solent.[40]

Notes

1
Foed., ix, 190, 204–5 (Sheen); PRO E364/48, m. 1 (Morgan); Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii, 302.

2
Foed., ix, 190, 204–5; PRO E403/617, m. 15 (19 July); Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii, 302; *Proc. PC*, ii, 140–2, 150. Pamphlet: *Twenty-six poems*, 58–60. War material: Strecche, 'Chron.', 150–1; Wylie and Waugh, i, 159–63, 447.

3
Parl. Rolls, ix, 66–7, 68–9 [2–5, 10–11]; *Foed.*, ix, 183–8; PRO E364/48, m. 2d (Bp Durham), m. 4 (Dorset), m. 4d (Ware), m. 5d (Bp Norwich). The reference to Langley and Beaufort as attending a council meeting in Feb. 1415 (*Proc. PC*, ii, 150–1) must be an error.

4
Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 182–3, 191.

5
Ord., x, 219–21; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 46–7; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 284–5; Famiglietti, 155; *Finot, 61–4; ibid., 73–6 (datable to end Oct./early Nov.); *Journ. B. Paris,* 56, 57–8; 'Geste des nobles', 153–4. Alençon: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 398. Richemont: *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 908–9.

6
'Texte Authentique', 212–15; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 394–6; *Finot, 71–2.

7
*L. Mirot (1914 [1]), 308–10; *Finot, 74; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 53–7; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 195–6; Gruel, *Chron.*, 11–12. Date: Bn Fr. 32511, fol. 19vo. Provostship: *Journ. B. Paris*, 57; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 194; *Gall. Reg.*, iv, no. 16488. Richemont and Nemours: AN X1a 8602, fol. 295.

8
Chauvelays, 239–44 (Lagny); *L. Mirot (1914 [1]), 310–15; *Finot, 80–1, 90–1, 93–4; *Cartellieri (1912–14), iii, 17–18, 18–20 (date seems to be a scribal error), 20–2, 32–3, 35; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 402–4.

9
*Finot, 80–2, 93–7; *L. Mirot (1914 [1]), 315–19. Visit to Senlis: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 59.

10
PRO E101/321/23; E364/48, m. 2d (Bp Durham); *Foed.*, ix, 197–200; *L. Mirot (1914 [1]), 314–15; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 408; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 321; *Journ. B. Paris,* 58–9.

11
*Finot, 90–2; *Cartellieri (1912–14), iii, 32–8. News from England: *Inv. AC Toulouse,* i, 487–8 (AA37/38). Courtenay was lodged in the Hôtel de Navarre: 'Procès Fusoris', 193.

12
*L. Mirot (1914 [1]), 319–20, 321–3; *Cartellieri (1912–14), iii, 22–7; Usk, *Chron.*, 252; Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 648.

13
AN J546/10 (written summary of 13 March of demands probably made in February); 'Procès Fusoris', 214–15; *Foed.*, ix, 212–14; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 408, 500–2; Chaplais, *Eng. Med. Dipl. Prac.*, no. 75 (p. 128). Defence: BN Fr. 25709/726 (*taille*); 'Extraits journ. Trésor', no. 514.

14
Provostship: *Gall. Reg.*, iv, no. 16488; *Journ. B. Paris,* 59. Coup: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 68–70; 'Geste des nobles', 154–5. Ordinance: AN X1a 8602, fols 301–302vo. Military arrangements: *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 902, 910. *Échevins*: AN KK1009, fol. 1vo. Captain-Gen.: AN J369/22.

15
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 70, 76; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* v, 288; *L. Mirot (1914 [1]), 320; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 64, 76; *Proc. PC,* ii, 167.

16
PRO E364/48, mm. 2d (Bp Durham), 5d (Bp Norwich). Shipping: PRO E403/619, mm. 10, 13 (17 Jan., 27 Feb.); *CPR 1413–16*, 294–5; *CCR 1413–19,* 176; *Foed.*, ix, 218, 238–9. Shipping: *Foed.*, ix, 215, 216–18; PRO 403/619, mm. 10, 13, 15 (17 Jan., 27 Feb., 2 Mar.). On Clitheroe: *HoC*, ii, 598–602. Aldermen: *Mems. London,* 603–4.

17
Proc. PC, ii, 150–1, 155–8; *Brut*, ii, 375; Waurin, *Rec. cron.*, ii, 166, 167–8. Henry Scrope's indenture at *Foed.*, ix, 230–2 is in more or less standard form.

18
Foed., ix, 223; BL Add. MSS 38525, fols 35–40vo; PRO E101/69/3 (360–75), E101/69/4–7; PRO E364/56, mm. 4 (D. Exeter), 4 (Robesart), 4d (Hungerford), 5 (Marshal). Numbers: PRO E101/45/5 covers about five-sixths of the companies. The complete surviving records are analysed in

Curry (2000 [1]), 406–23 and Curry (2005), 57–60, 65–6; cf. Bell et al., 41. Surgeons: *Foed.*, ix, 237. Shipping: PRO E364/66, m. 1 (Clitheroe and Curteys); *Reg. Jurade*, ii, 193–4; Morosini, *Chron.*, ii, 18–20.

19
Gesta, 16.

20
Acta Concilii, iv, no. 463.

21
Ant. Kal., ii, 83–4; *Gesta*, 16–18. A version of the notarised transcription is at PRO E30/1695.

22
Bell et al., 99, 139–43, 271–2.

23
Strickland and Hardy, 312–13, 410–12. Steel crossbows are recorded in the siege of Rouen of 1418–19 but in terms suggesting that they were still uncommon: *Actes Chanc. Henri VI,* no. 62. Fortescue, *Governance*, 138.

24
Richard II: Tout, 245–6, 252–3, *268–72. Pisan: *Book of Fayttes of Armes,* 154.

25
*Garnier, 25n[1], 26n[1], 27n[1].

26
Proc. PC, ii, 339–41; 'Procès Fusoris', 208; *Foed.*, ix, 159; *CPR 1413–16*, 292; *Issues Exch.*, 332; PRO E101/69/7 (511–12, 514–15), E101/45/5.

27
See Harriss (1985), 159–79. Annuities: *Parl. Rolls*, ix, 9 [12].

28
Proc. PC, ii, 148, 172–80.

29
Convocation: *Rec. Convoc.*, v, 12–13, xiii, 343–4. Borrowing: *Proc. PC*, ii, 165–6, 170–1; Steel, 151–3; PRO E403/619, m. 12 (26 Feb.) (forced loan); *Foed.*, ix, 241, 268, 271, 284, 312; *Mems. London*, 603–5.

30
Foed., ix, 257–8, 284–6, 298–9, 405, 416–17; Stratford; Nicolas (1833), App. III; Wylie and Waugh, i, 475–6.

31
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 500–10; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 288.

32
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 506; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 71–2; *Foed.*, ix, 219–20, 262–8; Besse, *Recueil*, 94.

33
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 512–16; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 288; Usk, *Chron.*, 254; Besse, *Recueil*, 94–5; 'Procès Fusoris', 240. Topography: *VCH Hampshire*, v, 13–14.

34
'Procès Fusoris', 157, 223, 223–4, 224–5, 240, 241–2, 270. Topography: D. Keene, *Survey of Medieval Winchester*, ii (1985), 732–6.

35
Besse, *Recueil*, 95–105; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* v, 516–20; Chaplais, *Eng. Med. Dipl. Prac.*, no. 75 (p. 126). Safe-conducts: *Foed.*, ix, 221.

36
Besse, *Recueil*, 105–11; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* v, 520–6; Chaplais, *Eng. Med. Dipl. Prac.*, no. 75; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 289; 'Procès Fusoris', 246; **Cop. S. Andree*, 257–8;

37
'Procès Fusoris', 248–9; Gairdner, 'Conspiracy', 584, 585.
38
Gairdner, 'Conspiracy', 582–4, 586–7, 588–92; *Foed.*, ix, 300–1; *Parl. Rolls*, ix, 121–2 [6]. On the conspirators: Pugh, 92–9, 102–5.
39
Select Cases, vii, 236–9; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 658–62; Gairdner, 'Conspiracy', 587; *Gesta*, 18; *Parl. Rolls*, ix, 119–24 [6]; Usk, *Chron.*, 254. Welsh in Paris: 'Extr. journ. Trésor', 420.
40
Gesta, 20, 58. *Trinity*: PRO E101/44/24; *Soper Accounts,* 106. Ships, seamen: Morosini, *Chron.*, ii, 18–20; *Reg. Jurade*, ii, 193–4.

CHAPTER XI

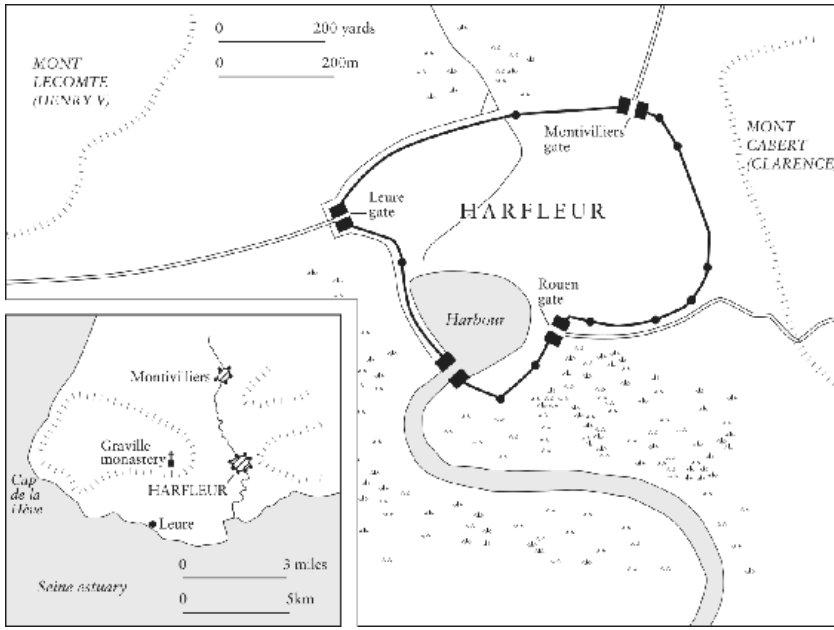
Harfleur and Agincourt, 1415

The English fleet arrived off the small harbour of Saint-Denis Chef-de-Caux (now engulfed by the modern town of Sainte-Adresse) in the late afternoon of 13 August 1415 after two days at sea. A council of war on board the *Trinity Royal* decided to leave the landings until the next day rather than risk having part of the army ashore and part on board their ships when night fell. South of the Cap de la Hève a rocky beach extended east along the estuary. Here, shortly before dawn on the following morning, the King sent a scouting party ashore with their horses under the command of the nineteen-year-old John Holland. The ground rose steeply from the beach up a rocky incline to a plateau some 300 feet above the sea and extending east towards Harfleur. Holland and his company made their way to the top. Shortly, shallowdraught barges began the slow business of landing men and horses and ferrying troops in relays from the great cogs lying off the shore. The ease with which the English were able to put so many men and horses ashore without interference came as a surprise to themselves as well as to the French. It took three days to disembark the whole army. For the whole of that time the fleet lay off the cape in full view of the shore. Soldiers struggling over the sides and wading ashore from ships laden with heavy equipment are notoriously vulnerable. The rocky foreshore would have been an easy site for the French to defend. But there was no sign of any activity.[1]

On the first day of the landings the King established a temporary headquarters on the heights in the priory of Graville about a mile and a half from Harfleur. From here he sent men forward to explore the lie of the land and the defences of the town. On 17 August 1415, with all his men ashore, he opened his campaign. He did not unfurl his banners, the traditional signal for unrestrained arson, looting and killing. Instead he marked the occasion by issuing ordinances of war forbidding indiscriminate torching of buildings, the looting of churches and all attacks on unarmed women, priests and church servants. Ordinances of this kind were by now routine at the outset of a major English campaign. They were directed at least as much to the maintenance of discipline in the army as to the protection of non-combatants. Yet Henry showed every sign of

taking them more seriously than earlier English captains, on one occasion personally condemning to death a soldier found with a church pyx up his sleeve. Henry set out to win French opinion to his side. To the French who were captured by his soldiers in the fields and villages he invoked the good government of St Louis, one of the most potent political myths of late medieval France. 'You have travailed too long under the yoke of oppression,' he told them, 'but I have now come into my own land, my native country, my proper realm, to bring you the ease and liberty which St Louis gave his people.' Allegations of destruction and atrocity were clichés of war reporting then as now. But well-informed contemporaries thought the English soldiery remarkably well-disciplined by the low standards to which they were accustomed. The chronicler of Saint-Denis was told by those who had observed the English army at first hand that Henry's ordinances of war were scrupulously obeyed. The French, he believed, received better treatment at their hands than they did from the soldiers of their own army.[2]

In six centuries the sea has retreated on the north side of the Seine estuary. Harfleur, which today is well inland and absorbed by the sprawling industrial town of Le Havre, was a major port in the early fifteenth century with a population of between 6,000 and 8,000 people living well on the Atlantic carrying trades and on piracy. The town was situated at the point where the River Lézarde flowed into the estuary of the Seine. At high tide the sea lapped against its walls before ebbing for nearly a mile to uncover a great expanse of mudflats. The Lézarde, which passed through the middle of the town, was dredged so as to create a broad channel by which ships approached from the estuary, passing between two tall towers into the great harbour basin within the walls. These towers were part of a complete circuit of walls about two and a half miles in circumference, pierced by twenty-six towers and three fortified gateways and defended by a double line of ditches and moats. In the weeks before the English arrived the townsmen had done their best to enhance their defences. The channel leading to the harbour had been blocked by sharpened stakes pointing outwards from the bed of the river. Great timber barbicans as high as the walls had been constructed in front of each of the town's three gates. But for all this Harfleur was weak. Its walls dated from the 1340s and 1350s. They were overlooked on two sides, from the ridge of Mont Cabert to the east and the plateau of Mont Lecomte to the west.[3]



7 The siege of Harfleur, August–September 1415

Ultimate responsibility for the conduct of the defence of Harfleur lay with the eighteen-year-old Dauphin, who had had himself nominated as the King's Captain-General throughout France. Louis of Guyenne had become an adept politician in the three years since he had first claimed his place at the centre of affairs. But he had no experience of military command and delegated the whole conduct of the campaign to the two principal military officers of the Crown, the Constable Charles d'Albret and the Marshal Jean de Boucicaut. They were widely criticised for their failure to stop the English at the water's edge. There were angry scenes in the French royal council, in which Albret was accused of incompetence and even treason. But the critics did not appreciate the difficulties under which they were labouring. The latest *taille* had been proclaimed in March but the first instalment had not fallen due until the beginning of July. Its collection was widely resisted. As a result the government's preparations had so far been funded mainly by forced loans extracted from churchmen and senior officials. The proceeds of these loans were not nearly equal to the needs of the commanders in the field. The few troops at their disposal were thinly spread, unpaid and mutinous. There was no general summons until the end of August, by which time the English had been ashore for a fortnight. These problems were aggravated by the inevitable mistakes. The French commanders had guessed, probably from the choice of Southampton as the port of embarkation, that Henry V would attempt a landing in Normandy. But they thought that it was

likely to be south of the Seine, a region of low-lying ground and great open beaches where Edward III had landed in 1346, Henry of Grosmont in 1356 and the Duke of Clarence in 1412. The main French commander in Normandy was the Duke of Alençon, one of the principal territorial magnates of the region. His men were concentrated south of the estuary in the Cotentin peninsula around Valognes, Carentan, Honfleur and Caen. The Pays de Caux north of the Seine estuary was almost undefended. Alençon's deputy there was John lord of Estouteville, who was based at Montivilliers, a small walled town some three miles north of Harfleur. On the eve of the English landings Harfleur itself was defended by its citizens and a small garrison of thirty-four men-at-arms with an unknown number of crossbowmen. They had arrived just three days before.[4]

Once the news of the landings spread and Henry V's objective became obvious the French reacted with speed. The lord of Estouteville threw himself into Harfleur and began to organise the defence. A line of ships chained together end to end was stretched across the channel giving access to the harbour. The cobbled road to Montivilliers was dug up. The sluices of the River Lézarde were closed, thus flooding the whole of the low-lying plain north of the walls. The English had brought with them a large prefabricated bridge made of timber and hide, to be assembled in sections and used to cross the river. This was now useless and the besiegers' attempts to invest the town from both sides were delayed. The delay was brief but proved to be significant, for it enabled Raoul de Gaucourt, one of Charles of Orléans' chamberlains and the son of his most experienced military adviser, to enter the town by the east gate with some notable French captains and 300 men-at-arms hurriedly recruited in Normandy and Picardy. Together with Estouteville's men and the original garrison, this brought the total strength of the defence to about 400 men-at-arms in addition to crossbowmen and armed citizens.

On 17 August the English host appeared over the crest of Mont Lecomte and invested the town on the westward side. On the evening of the following day Henry V sent his brother the Duke of Clarence with a large part of the English army to occupy the ridge of Mont Cabert on the east side. This was no easy feat. It involved an all-night march by a circuitous route of nine or ten miles to avoid the flooded valley of the Lézarde. At dawn on the 19th Clarence's men appeared on the crest above the town. The town was now almost completely sealed off from the outside. The English occupied the high ground to the east and west. To the north access to the place was prevented by the floodwaters of the Lézarde which were regularly patrolled by English soldiers in small boats. To the

south lay the mudflats, the sea and the English fleet. Harfleur had not been equipped or stocked against a siege and 'useless mouths' (women, children and old people) had not been expelled to eke out supplies. The defenders were doomed unless a large enough French army could be raised to relieve it or some way could be found of bringing in food and materials.

During his night march the Duke of Clarence had intercepted a large wagon-train carrying much-needed equipment and barrels of gunpowder. It was the last attempt to bring in supplies overland. Thereafter the only supplies reaching the town were those brought in across the estuary from Honfleur at night using a small oared galley and a volunteer crew. The French government badly needed a war fleet at this moment. It had none. No steps had been taken to requisition merchant shipping for war service. An inspection of the arsenal at Rouen revealed that the oared war barges laid up there, most of which must have been at least a quarter of a century old, were all unserviceable.[5]

On 19 August 1415 the English King summoned Harfleur to surrender. This was an important symbolic act, especially for a man who claimed to be addressing his own subjects. Once his summons had been refused, as it inevitably was, his honour was committed to a successful outcome and the defenders would be at his mercy if the place was taken by force of arms. This was the 'Deuteronomic Law' which the King's herald proclaimed to the sound of the trumpet below the sea gate:

> When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it then proclaim peace unto it … and if it will make no peace with thee but will make war against thee then thou shalt besiege it and when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thine hands thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword … and all that is in the city even the spoil thereof shalt thou take unto thyself. (*Deuteronomy* XX: 10–14)

The siege of Harfleur was essentially an artillery battle interrupted by periodic assaults upon the breaches made by the guns. It would be won, as Henry wrote to the city of London 'by the efforts of our subjects about us and by the deployment in strength of our cannon and other ordnance'. The guns were dug in around the town on the first day of the siege. Their crews served in shifts day and night, protected from crossbow bolts by timber screens and from sorties by deep trenches and earthworks. According to a vivid French account the English bombards were of 'monstrous size, spewing out great boulders amid clouds of thick smoke and a noise like the fires of Hell'. In fact since the guns had had to be manhandled from barges directly onto the beaches and dragged up the steep escarpments beyond they cannot have been of the largest

calibre. But they were plainly powerful enough to do a great deal of damage to the town within a few days of being deployed. The suburbs were quickly destroyed, a large number of buildings within the walls reduced to rubble and serious damage done to the walls, towers and barbicans.[6]

The defenders fought back with courage, tenacity and ingenuity. The walls were regularly breached but the damage was always made good by improvised works overnight. The streets were covered in soft clay, earth and dung to absorb the shock of the missiles and prevent ricochets. The garrison's main object was to keep the besiegers' artillery as far away from the walls as possible. They dug ditches and built outworks some distance from the walls, which they defended with ferocity. They fired at the English gun emplacements with their own smaller-calibre pieces. The English collected piles of wooden faggots to fill in the moats but the French destroyed them with missiles tipped with burning pitch. The English built great wheeled assault towers as high as the walls while the French stored barrels of quicklime and explosives with which to meet the expected attack when it came. The English dug deep mines beneath the moats to bring down sections of the walls but the defenders dug countermines beneath them. The English dug trenches towards the barbicans in order to bring their men and guns closer but the French dammed the Lézarde so as to raise the water level around the town, forcing the besiegers to withdraw some of their artillery to the limits of its effective range. In spite of all the efforts of the garrison the English inched their way towards the walls. Eventually they succeeded in seizing the outer line of ditches on the eastern side. They were then able to resite their artillery at point-blank range. Henry V and his officers did their best to persuade their enemies that further resistance was hopeless. Bishop Courtenay sent a captured French priest to an acquaintance in Paris with a message about the strength of the English forces and the high level of their stocks. With 4,000 tuns of wine and 4,000 of flour they could maintain the siege for another six months if they had to, this man was told to say. The English King personally confronted Raoul de Gaucourt, whom he had invited into his camp with some of his companions under a flag of truce. Normandy was rightfully his, he said, and he would take it whatever happened. The French captains were defiant. They were not holding Harfleur for him, they said, and were confident that the King of France would shortly relieve them.[7]

Attempts to organise an army of relief had already started in Paris. By about the middle of August 1415 the difficult financial situation had begun to ease as tax revenues came in. Selective

appeals were sent out for troops. The first of the additional companies had mustered by 20 August. The Duke of Alençon, who was thought to have performed poorly in the crisis, was dismissed as Captain of Normandy to his great displeasure and replaced by Marshal Boucicaut. The Marshal and the Admiral Clignet de Bréban roamed about the Pays de Caux picking on English foragers and launching sudden raids against the English siege lines. In the last week of August 1415 Charles VI (or those who acted in his name) proclaimed a general summons throughout France. All noblemen fit to bear arms were called on to muster before the Dauphin and march on Harfleur. The Dauphin was to be the figurehead of this army and his presence no doubt encouraged recruits. But effective command was given to Charles d'Albret. In desperation the government despatched agents to hire ships in Flanders and Brittany and recruit skilled craftsmen to patch up the rotting old hulls lying in the Rouen arsenal.

It was already too late. The garrison was reaching the end of its powers of resistance. Their food was running out. Their casualties were high. Many of those who were still unwounded were sick. The destruction of the defences had gone well beyond their capacity to improvise repairs. By the end of August the English artillery had destroyed two of the three barbicans, broken in the gates behind them and demolished an entire section of wall. North of the town Henry V's men were engaged in diverting the course of the Lézarde, thus draining the flood basin and depriving the defenders of fresh water. At the beginning of September a man was let down into the ditch from the town at dead of night with a message for the Dauphin containing a graphic account of conditions in the town and an urgent appeal for relief.[8]

The French government achieved remarkable things in the short time available. At least thirteen small oared barges were waiting at the quayside at Rouen while repairs on them were completed. These were to be used to break the blockade on the seaward side. Some of them were already being loaded with victuals. On 10 September 1415 Charles VI was taken to the abbey of Saint-Denis to receive the *Oriflamme* at the abbot's hands. The Dauphin was at Vernon supervising the muster of the army. His strength at this stage is uncertain but pay records survive for more than 200 companies. These suggest that he must have had at least 4,000 men-at-arms with him by the middle of September and perhaps half that number of crossbowmen. It was not nearly enough. None of the great feudatories of France had yet appeared. They were expected to assemble later at Rouen. But the defenders of Harfleur could hold out no longer. On 15 September, after fighting off several assaults

on weak points of the walls and suffering the destruction of the last of their barbicans, the French captains in the town sent a parlementaire into the Duke of Clarence's lines to ask for terms. They wanted a truce for three weeks until 6 October to allow time for the Dauphin to relieve them. They promised to surrender if he had not come by then. The English, who must have been well aware of the scale of the French government's preparations, thought that this was too long. The Duke of Clarence gave them until 18 September. For two days the guns fell silent. Then, on the day before the deadline, when negotiations had made no progress, the English King sent a message into the town telling the defenders that unless they surrendered by one o'clock on the following day he would break off negotiations and assault the place.

From the piles of rubble to which their walls had been reduced the garrison could see the preparations being made for the assault. In addition to the soldiers, the crews of the ships lying off the town were being brought ashore to take part. At nightfall the trumpeters could be heard going through the English lines with orders for the men. The defenders sent a fresh message to the English King offering to surrender on 22 September unless they were relieved by then, provided that Henry conceded a truce in the meantime and allowed them to send a delegation to report the new deadline to the French court. Henry agreed. On the next morning the agreement was sealed and the formalities were completed with the theatricality that Henry V always loved. A bishop dressed in full pontificals advanced towards the walls to take the oaths of the defenders and receive their hostages, accompanied by thirty-two royal chaplains wearing uniform copes, each preceded by a liveried squire with a burning torch. The English King would make no promises about the treatment of the defenders but his subordinates were more reassuring. 'We will not do to you what you did to the inhabitants of Soissons,' they said.[9]

A delegation of twelve leading men of the town and garrison left at once to report the agreement to the Dauphin. It was a pure point of form intended to save the defenders' honour, for by the time that they reached Vernon it would be too late to relieve Harfleur. But the Dauphin told them that his army was not strong enough anyway. This judgment was probably right. The English would have the advantage of the defensive and, having drained the swamp north of Harfleur, would be able to concentrate most of their forces against a relieving army. The leader of the delegation, Guillaume lord of Hacqueville, returned with the Dauphin's bleak message on the morning of 22 September, the day that the town was due to surrender. At the appointed hour Raoul de Gaucourt came before

Henry V in his tents on Mont Lecomte, accompanied by the leading captains and citizens of the town. The English King received them sitting 'in his estate as royale as did ever eny kynge', according to a Londoner in the crowd. He kept them waiting on their knees for a long time before he would even look at them. The keys of the town were then silently delivered up and the town surrendered to the King's mercy. The gates were opened and resistance ceased, except for a band of die-hards who had refused to accept the decision of the captains of the town and held out for a few days longer in the towers at the entrance to the harbour. The King told the defenders that, although they had held his own town against him until the last minute, they 'would not be entirely without mercy'. But the limits of his mercy became apparent over the following days. The surviving members of the garrison, some 260 of them, were treated as prisoners of war and held for ransom. They were paroled with instructions to surrender by 11 November at Calais. Any townsmen found bearing arms were also treated as prisoners and the richest of them held for ransom. Other able-bodied men were allowed to remain in the town upon swearing oaths of fealty to the King of England. Henry had no use for the old and infirm. They were expelled en masse. Women and children were given the option of staying or leaving for some other part of France with five *sous* apiece for the journey. Some 2,000 of them chose to go. They made their way to Lillebonne where Marshal Boucicaut arranged for them to be resettled, mostly in Rouen. In practice few of the old inhabitants seem to have remained in Harfleur, even among the able-bodied. They had little reason to stay in a place which was destined to become an alien garrison town in a state of permanent military alert.[10]

For the French government the loss of Harfleur was a disaster of the first order. It was not only because of the creation of another permanent military threat on its flank like Calais. The government's failure to relieve it and the widespread belief that it had not even tried discredited it in the eyes of both Frenchmen and foreigners. Within days of the news Parisian street ditties, always sensitive barometers of the popular mood, were mocking the chivalry of France and the ministers of the King.

For the English, however, victory was not entirely sweet. It had been achieved at a high cost which broke Henry's army and changed the course of the campaign. Crammed for five weeks into the waterlogged meadows of the Lézarde, the troops were vulnerable to disease. The weather was hot. In spite of Bishop Courtenay's boasts the food brought from England had quickly run out or rotted. Foraging became increasingly difficult as the French

began to organise the defence. The troops had been reduced to eating unripe fruit. At the beginning of September dysentery had begun to spread through the army and shortly reached epidemic proportions. About 2,000 men are said to have died, far more than were killed in the fighting. They included Bishop Courtenay himself, Michael Pole Earl of Suffolk and several other prominent captains whose bodies were shipped back to England. The rest were buried in a mass grave on the heights of Graville. About 5,000 more, including the Duke of Clarence and the Earl of Arundel, were too sick to fight. Arundel never recovered. He died in England later that year. In all Henry had lost about half the army that he had brought with him from England.

The captains' indentures still had nine months to run. Writing to the municipality of Bordeaux at the beginning of September, one of Henry's Gascon clerks had reported that once Harfleur had been taken his plan was to capture nearby Montivilliers and then secure the coastal region of Normandy as far as Dieppe before advancing up the Seine valley towards Rouen and Paris. With the reduced forces now at his disposal these ambitious projects had to be abandoned. The great majority of the King's council urged him to return directly to England with the fleet. But Henry rejected their advice. Instead he decided to march 150 miles through Normandy and Picardy and re-cross the Channel from Calais. The fleet was released to return to England, taking with it the sick and most of baggage and equipment. Of the men who remained, 300 men-at-arms and 900 archers were left to hold Harfleur under the command of the Earl of Dorset, no easy task given the destruction of its defences during the siege. That left the King with just 900 men-at-arms and 5,000 archers to accompany him on his march, in addition to an uncertain number of armed servants and pages accompanying their masters. As his councillors pointed out, the lateness of the season, his reduced numbers and the growing strength of the French army made this a dangerous choice.[11]

Why did Henry court danger in this way? The main reason was his obsession with his image in France and to some extent in the rest of Europe. His claim to the French throne and his conquests in Normandy may have been no more than bargaining counters in the haggling over territory but they were not worth much even as bargaining counters unless men took them seriously. He wanted to demonstrate to the French the impotence of their rulers and the inability of the Dauphin to protect them. Before sailing from Southampton he had sent a herald to France with a letter in which he defended his conduct in breaking off negotiations at Winchester, complained once more of the 'denial of justice' which he had

suffered at the hands of the French, and appealed to the judgment of the God of battles. This bombastic correspondence, which continued during the siege of Harfleur, culminated in a letter delivered to the Dauphin after the town had fallen in which Henry offered to decide the issue between them by single combat. Henry did not of course expect the French King to be persuaded or the Dauphin to accept his challenge. These documents were intended for public consumption. But the gulf between his public pretensions and the perceived reality clearly troubled the King. The Frenchman who had predicted on the road to Dover in July that the King would discredit himself by a mere tip-and-run raid into France had a point, and Henry knew it. He did not want it to be said that having burned a path into France, captured a single town and publicly claimed divine assistance for his plans, he had simply scuttled home without showing his face in the country which he claimed as his own. So, on 8 October 1415, after resting his men for three weeks, Henry formed up his army in three divisions and set out from Harfleur up the coast road to Abbeville and the mouth of the Somme. He had no intention of confronting the French army if he could avoid it. He expected to outmarch them and reach the pale of Calais first. The men were ordered to lose no time in looting or taking prisoners and to bring rations for a march of just eight days.[12]

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When Henry V set out from Harfleur the bulk of the French army was still encamped on the banks of the Seine at Vernon. The Dauphin had been there for nearly a month. Contemporaries were puzzled and frustrated by his immobility, especially once the extent of the English losses became known.[13] The truth was that he did not dare to move west against the English forces at Harfleur because it would have left Paris uncovered at a time when the Duke of Burgundy's intentions were unclear.

John the Fearless had intended from the outset to extract the maximum of political advantage from the crisis. At the end of June 1415 he had sent his ambassadors before the Dauphin with a list of his demands. There were two main ones: access to the King and the immediate proclamation of a general amnesty for his Parisian allies. When these demands were rejected out of hand he had responded by raising an army estimated at 3,000 men in his Burgundian domains and in those of his allies the Dukes of Lorraine and Savoy. They had been allowed to rampage unchecked across Champagne and Brie. Mounted raiders led by John's protégé Elyon de Jacqueville, the notorious Cabochian leader of 1413, had spread through the country east of the capital, moving north towards

Soissons and south towards Sens, burning and looting as they went. A delegation of royal councillors led by the Dauphin's chancellor Jean de Vailly had gone before the Duke of Burgundy in the castle of Rouvres outside Dijon to reason with him. But John the Fearless was not to be reasoned with and his old enemy Jean de Vailly was perhaps the worst person to try. He received little more than practised evasions. The Duke agreed to swear to observe the peace of Arras, which he had hitherto declined to do, but only subject to a reservation that made the gesture largely meaningless. The Dauphin, he stipulated, must grant the general amnesty for which John had been holding out for the past year. Otherwise he would not commit himself to anything. Negotiations were pursued fitfully through August and September and resulted in an untidy compromise on the question of the amnesty. The government agreed to extend it to all but forty-five named ringleaders of the tumults in Paris. The Duke of Burgundy for his part agreed with ill grace to withdraw the reservations to his oath.

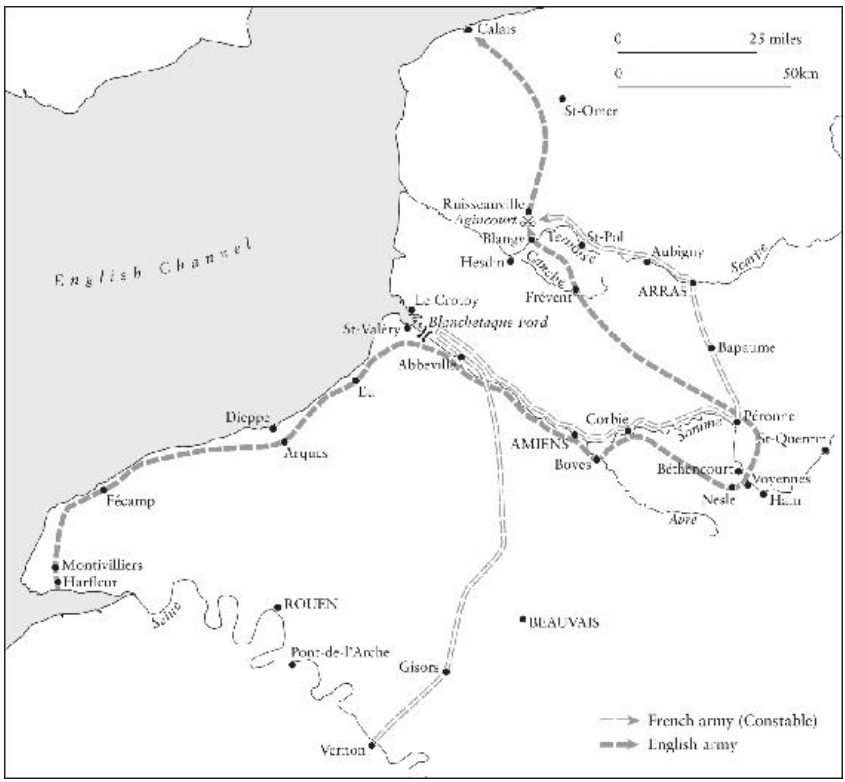
There was then a fresh bone of contention as the Duke and the Dauphin's councillors fell out over John's participation in the campaign against the English. John declared himself ready to join the fight against the English with all of his considerable strength. This, however, was the last thing that the Dauphin wanted. John's presence would have divided the army into rancorous tribes and made it practically impossible to exclude him from the King's presence. So he called on the Duke to send 500 of his best men-at-arms and 300 bowmen to join the army but to stay away himself. A similar request was addressed to the Duke of Orléans. John the Fearless declared himself insulted and disparaged. He was a peer of France, he said, one of the closest kinsmen of the King and by rights among his chief counsellors. He would attend in person with his entire host or there would be no assistance from him at all. The result of this prolonged stand-off was that throughout August and September, when the Dauphin was trying to concentrate his strength against the English outside Harfleur, he was obliged to look over his shoulder at the enemy in his rear. There were persistent rumours that the Duke of Burgundy was acting in concert with the English. He denied the rumours and they were in fact untrue. But people could hardly be blamed for believing them.[14]

The news of Henry V's plan to bolt for Calais jolted the French commanders into action. They learned of the English King's intentions before he had left Harfleur, some time in the first week of October. The reports led to an immediate change of strategy. Urgent steps were taken to put troops into Paris and secure the city against the Duke of Burgundy. Meanwhile Charles d'Albret marched rapidly

north from Vernon in the hope of cutting off the English at the Somme. With him went the principal French captains including Marshal Boucicaut, Arthur de Richemont and the Duke of Alençon, and all the men then available. The Dauphin left for Rouen where the remaining princely retinues were due to muster in a few days. These moves seriously wrong-footed Henry V. Covering about twenty miles a day his army took five days to cross the Pays de Caux and the plain of southern Picardy, a creditable achievement. But as they approached the Somme it became clear that the French had beaten them to it. Fifteen miles south of the river they encountered a large French garrison at Eu, which sortied from the gates and attacked their left flank. Prisoners who fell into English hands spoke of powerful concentrations of troops ahead. Henry V had been planning to cross the Somme at the ford of Blanchetaque, where men could wade across the river at low tide as Edward III and his army had done in 1346 before the battle of Crécy. But the French had already anticipated this. On 12 October outriders brought in a Gascon prisoner, a retainer of the Constable, who told them that Albret was already in Abbeville. Blanchetaque, he told them, was heavily guarded. Over the next twenty-four hours English scouts confirmed his statement. The French, they reported, had staked the ford at Blanchetaque and were holding the north bank of the river in force. All the bridges and causeways upstream had been broken. The English army was caught between Albret's army on the Somme and the fresh army now gathering behind them at Rouen. Their route to Calais was barred. Fortune, declared the French commanders, had delivered the enemy trussed and bound into their hands.[15]

The English King halted his columns south of Abbeville on 12 October 1415 and summoned his captains for a council of war. Edward III had fought his away across the ford of Blanchetaque in 1346, but after a long discussion Henry V's captains decided that this was too risky. Instead they decided to move east up the left bank of the Somme in search of a crossing. The first day of the march showed what was in store. Abbeville, where they had hoped to seize a bridge, was heavily defended. Pont-Rémy, five miles upstream, had an unfortified stone bridge but the masonry had been broken and the French were drawn up in battle order on the north side. As the English marched along the south bank of the Somme the Constable, accompanied by the Duke of Alençon and the Counts of Richemont and Vendôme, followed them with a large mounted force from the opposite side. Much of the riverbank was marsh, defying attempts to improvise a crossing. The bridges and the fords had been made impassable, as the scouts had warned them. The

ground ahead of them had been abandoned and wasted to prevent them from foraging. Their stores were low and the men hungry. On 15 October they passed the walls and towers of Amiens. Here their rations ran out. They made for Boves, a small, unwalled town with a castle commanding a bridge over the River Avre. The castle was garrisoned. But its defenders were not strong enough to dispute the army's passage. They made a deal to avoid the destruction of their town, supplying the invaders with bread and wine to fill their bellies and allowing them to rest for the night. On the next morning the English were able to cross the Avre unmolested. On 17 October they arrived opposite the walled town of Corbie. The bridge here was intact, but it was too strongly defended to allow them to cross.[16]



8 Harfleur to Calais, September–October 1415

From Corbie the Somme takes a great loop east to Péronne and then south to the fortress-town of Ham. Henry V seized the opportunity to shake off the French Constable's army. Marching cross-country he cut across the loop and regained the Somme near the walled town of Nesle late on 18 October. When the army arrived outside Nesle, Albret, who had had to follow the sinuous bends of

the river, had got no further than Péronne, ten miles from the English as the crow flies but separated from them by a bleak district of marsh and scrub with no direct roads. Three miles east of Nesle the English scouts found two usable fords by the villages of Béthencourt and Voyennes. The men of Saint-Quentin had been charged with the defence of these crossings. But they had left them unguarded and the work of hacking up the causeways was unfinished. It was still just possible for men to cross them in single file. On the morning of 19 October the archers of the van crossed the river, followed by the cavalry companies of Sir John Cornwall and Sir Gilbert Umfraville. Once a secure bridgehead had been established on the other side the engineers put down faggots and straw over the causeway and constructed a timber carriageway with staircases, doors and window-frames pillaged from nearby houses. The men could now cross three abreast over one ford while the baggage and equipment was hauled across at the other. Towards the end of the afternoon some companies of French cavalry arrived from Péronne and Saint-Quentin. They hovered on the fringes of the English army waiting for reinforcements. But it was already too late to interfere. Shortly, they vanished. By nightfall the whole of the English army was across together with its horses, equipment and baggage.[17]

Ninety miles away at Rouen the recruitment of the second French army had not gone well. The Dauphin had arrived in the city on about 12 October followed shortly by the Dukes of Berry, Anjou, Bourbon and Bar and John the Fearless's brother the Count of Nevers with their contingents. On about 17 October Bourbon, Bar and Nevers left for the Somme with every man available. The continual tumults of court and council over the past years had taken their toll on recruitment. Charles of Orléans sent the 500 men-at-arms that had been asked of him but was forbidden to appear in person until the Dauphin finally relented at the last minute. Charles VI's council appears to have relented in the Duke of Burgundy's case too but his attitude remained as opaque as ever. In early October he told his officials that he had already left to join the Dauphin and would appear in person with his son the Count of Charolais and the entire nobility of Flanders and Artois at his back. In fact John had not left. Instead he had sent his councillor Regnier Pot to haggle with the Dauphin and in the meantime his troops had been told not to leave for the army until he gave them the word. Regnier Pot's demands are not recorded but presumably fell on deaf ears, for John the Fearless never did give the word. Philip of Charolais, who was at Oudenarde in Flanders, actually set out with his company but stopped at Arras waiting for the orders which never came.

The Duke of Brittany hedged his bets as he had always done. He had recently renewed the maritime truce between Brittany and England for ten years on terms which fell only just short of a treaty of neutrality. When he received Charles VI's summons his first reaction was to send his emissaries before John the Fearless in Burgundy to concert their responses. Both men saw the crisis as an opportunity to promote their own interests. They waited on events in case the defeat of France had more to offer them than victory. John V came to Rouen with his company. But when he arrived he coolly informed the King that he would proceed no further unless Charles ceded to him the French royal enclave at Saint-Malo in northern Brittany.[18]

On 20 October 1415 the royal council met in the castle of Rouen. A messenger had arrived from the commanders on the Somme with a report on the situation. The main body of the French army was encamped between Bapaume and Miraumont about ten miles north of the Somme across the road to Arras. The Constable was at Péronne with most of the leading French captains and a large force of cavalry. Charles of Orléans had arrived from the Loire the night before. Bourbon, Bar and Nevers had crossed the Somme at Corbie with the companies from Rouen and joined them that morning. The plan was to fall back on Bapaume and then withdraw to the line of the River Scarpe north-west of Arras where they would be standing directly across Henry V's route to Calais. They asked for the King's authority to force him to battle there. Thirty-five men sat at the council which considered this proposal. Apart from the King, the Dauphin and the Dukes of Berry, Anjou and Brittany, it was largely an official and ecclesiastical gathering. Louis of Anjou was the only experienced soldier present but he was a sick man and his military career had been distinctly chequered. The Duke of Berry, in keeping with his long-standing aversion to the risks of war, was profoundly sceptical about the whole idea of fighting a decisive battle with the English. The Duke of Brittany, having obtained the grant of Saint-Malo from the King, was obstructive. He doubted whether the French army was strong enough without the Duke of Burgundy's contingent and declared that for his part he would have nothing to do with it unless John the Fearless was there. This aroused fierce controversy. Most of those present were intensely suspicious of John and had no desire to submit to his terms. In any event there was now no prospect of his getting there in time. After a long discussion it was agreed by a majority of thirty to five to order the Constable to engage the English army before they could reach Calais. Although it had been proclaimed far and wide since August that the campaign against the English would be conducted by the King and

the Dauphin in person it was decided that both of them should stay in Rouen together with the Dukes of Berry and Anjou. 'I would have exposed myself to every danger if I had had my way … It is the proper part of kingship,' Charles VI later recalled, 'but my councillors would not have it.' The battle of Poitiers was in everyone's mind. Better to lose a battle, said Jean de Berry, than a battle and a king too.[19]

By their own reckoning the French had 6,000 men-at-arms and 3,000 bowmen under arms. By the standard of previous royal armies these were modest numbers. A fresh summons was issued from Rouen calling on every man-at-arms to make his way day and night to the Constable's banner. An emissary was sent to the Count of Charolais at Arras to beg him to bring his company. The French captains at Péronne sent their own plea to Charolais and another to John the Fearless's brother Anthony Duke of Brabant. These appeals met with mixed success. The Duke of Brabant, who was more than a hundred miles away at Louvain, achieved prodigies of efficiency and valour and succeeded in collecting a substantial force within a day or two of receiving the call. Charolais on the other hand refused to move without his father's authority and later withdrew from Arras to Aire-sur-la-Lys on the frontier of Flanders. But many of his troops slipped away without leave and joined the army on their own initiative. The Duke of Brittany left Rouen immediately after the council meeting and entered Amiens on 22 October with a substantial company. A place had been reserved for him in the van of the French army. But John waited inexplicably at Amiens for three days as messengers arrived with ever more desperate appeals from the commanders of the army to join them. Meanwhile, volunteers streamed into the French camp in small companies. Crossbowmen and infantry were urgently raised in the industrial towns of Picardy and sent forward to the Somme front. The new arrivals increased the cavalry strength of the French army, according to the most reliable estimates, to between 8,000 and 9,000 men-at-arms in addition to bowmen and infantry, perhaps 14,000 troops in all. But it remained very largely an army of committed adherents of the Armagnac party. The rest of France stood apprehensively aside.[20]

The leaders of the French army had already anticipated the council's decision. On the morning of 20 October 1415 the Constable and the Dukes of Bourbon and Orléans sent three heralds into the English camp with a challenge to battle. Let the English King appoint deputies to agree a day and a place with them, they said, and provided that Charles VI consented they would meet him there. Henry V dismissed the heralds with a tip of 100 crowns and a

livery robe. Later that day he sent his own emissaries back with his response. He was not skulking behind stone walls, he said. He would head through open country for Calais, neither seeking nor avoiding battle. If they wanted a battle they knew where to find him without needing to agree a time and place. Meanwhile he told his own army to put on their armour and prepare for a great battle at any time. The English army resumed its march on 21 October. For four days they crossed the plain of southern Artois. The need to maintain close formation in case of attack made foraging for food all but impossible. Black skies and constant heavy rain added to their misery. The French army retreated before them at least a day ahead, leaving the churned up ground on either side of the road as marks of their passage. Their commanders planned to intercept the English army somewhere on the route to Calais where they could fight with advantage. But it had to be far enough south to rule out the threat of being attacked in the rear by the garrison at Calais. The Duke of Clarence was known to have landed there with his company on his way home. The French, who did not know the condition of his men, entertained real fears that he might try to join forces with his brother in Picardy.[21]

The major obstacle in Henry's path was the walled city of Arras, which was the hub of the road system of the region. The English army would have to find a route round it. The French commanders anticipated that their adversary would leave Arras to his right and make for Aubigny-en-Artois, the first usable crossing of the River Scarpe west of the city, before regaining the main road to Calais. Their original plan was to block his path there. The French cavalry must have reached the Scarpe by about 22 October. The English King tried to get ahead of them by taking a more westerly route. The French moved west along the valleys of the Scarpe and the Ternoise to preempt him. On about 23 October the French reached Saint-Pol on the River Ternoise. The English reached the river at Blangy some twelve miles downstream on the following day, 24 October. They seized the bridge at Blangy in a sharp encounter with a small company of French troops who were about to destroy it, and succeeded in bringing the whole of the army safely across the river. For a moment it looked as if they had outmarched their enemy. In front of them a steep escarpment rose some 300 feet from the north bank of the Ternoise to a broad plateau extending north to Saint-Omer and east to the Flemish cities of Lille and Douai. When the first detachments of the English army reached the summit their hearts sank. About half a mile away the entire French cavalry could be seen moving west across the plain in compact battalions 'like a swarm of locusts' to cut them off.[22]

The English had been outmanoeuvred at every point. Their scouts rode ahead of the army and returned to report that the French were making for Ruisseauville. From the bridge of Blangy the road passed due north towards Ruisseauville, an important staging post on the route to Flanders. Towards dusk the first French horsemen reached the road ahead of the English as it passed between the villages of Agincourt and Tramecourt. As the rest of the French cavalry caught up with them they drew up their troops across the English line of march. From the French positions the road sloped gently away to the south. On either side, it was flanked by open fields, and beyond the fields by dense woodland. As darkness fell, the English army came into view. Henry V advanced to within about a thousand yards of the French lines before halting his columns. A slight dip in the ground separated the two armies, but they were clearly visible to each other in the gloaming, and so close that the English could hear the music, chatter and the neighing of horses coming from the enemy lines. The French had expected to fight that afternoon. When the failing light made that impossible, they determined that the English should not escape them the next day. They built great bonfires to light up the landscape and posted scouts across the countryside to warn them in case their enemy should try to slip away in the night. The battle which Henry V had tried to avoid was now inevitable.[23]

The English army was in poor shape. The men had not eaten properly for several days. They were bivouacked in the open on sodden ground around Maisoncelles, wet through and cold. A steady rain persisted through the night. Only their desperate situation gave them the courage to fight. They were heavily outnumbered, by more than eight to one in cavalry and two to one overall. The priests went through the camp hearing the confessions of men who believed that the next day might be their last. Would that we had ten thousand more of the best archers in England, said Sir Walter Hungerford, one of Henry's household officers, only to be rebuked by the King in an exchange recorded by his chaplain and later made famous in Shakespeare's embroidered version: 'I would not have a single man more even if I could, for these that I have here with me are God's people whom he has graciously allowed me. Do you think that even with these few He cannot overcome the pride of the French and all their strength of numbers?' The two sides went through the motions of diplomacy, a Christian duty of those about to fight a great battle, although now hardly more than a matter of form. In the recrimination in France which followed the battle there were reports that Henry V had been willing to accept humiliating terms in return for a free passage to Calais, which the French had

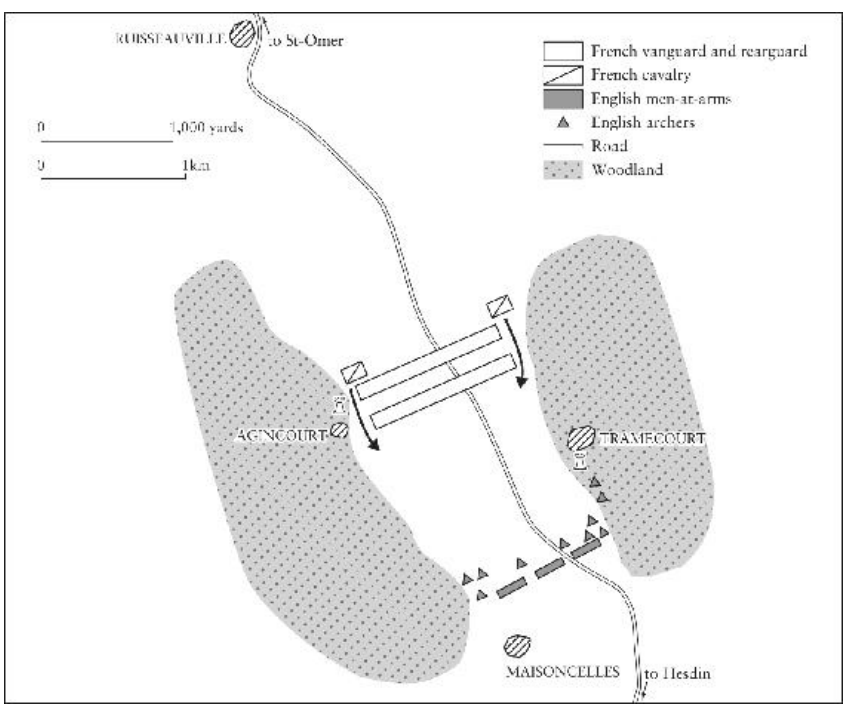
been too arrogant to accept. In reality the negotiations seem to have consisted of little more than an exchange of the parties' previous diplomatic positions.[24]

In the French camp all was not well. The Constable and the Marshals were the principal military officers of the Crown. But Charles d'Albret, vacillating and physically unimpressive, had never been much respected. Boucicaut was the most experienced soldier present with a military career extending back to the 1370s. But, as even the great Du Guesclin had discovered, the command of an army was not so much a matter of office as of rank. At Agincourt Albret and Boucicaut were outranked by the nineteen-year-old Duke of Orléans, now fighting his first battle, who as the king's nephew was nominally 'chief and sovereign' of the army. They were also outranked by the disputatious and assertive Dukes of Alençon and Bourbon, who had some military experience and much the loudest voices. Decisions had to be made in committee, often after a good deal of argument. The council of war in the French camp lasted much of the evening. Even now there were men who doubted the wisdom of engaging the English. In their parlous situation Henry's men were likely to sell their lives dearly. There was much concern about the English archers. Some of those present, remembering the disasters of the mid-fourteenth century, feared that massed longbowmen would be more than a match for their men-at-arms especially as the latter tended to tire easily in their heavy armour. Why run the risk of battle when the English were on their way home anyway? However, this was a minority view. Politically it was probably unthinkable, after Henry V's capture of Harfleur and his ostentatious challenges, to let him escape with impunity.

The main argument among the French commanders was about timing. They had almost all of their cavalry with them together with the crossbowmen who had been recruited in mixed companies with the men-at-arms. But fresh companies of volunteers were arriving all the time. The large contingent of the Duke of Brittany was at Amiens and the companies of the Dukes of Anjou and Brabant were reported to be on their way. The unmounted men, mostly infantry and crossbowmen recruited in the northern towns, had been left behind on the road in the rush to cut off the English advance and might not arrive for another day or two. The main question was whether to engage the English first thing the next morning or to wait. The professional captains, led by Albret and Boucicaut, were for waiting. They were receiving reinforcements by the hour and had no difficulty in supplying themselves whereas the English were known to be exhausted and hungry. Delay could only weaken them physically and undermine their morale. But the Dukes of Bourbon

and Alençon would have none of this. They thought that the cavalry were strong enough to overcome the English on their own and hinted that the rest were cowards. It was their view which prevailed.[25]

The main elements of the French battle plan had been worked out over the past two weeks. The French commanders assumed that the English would adopt their traditional tactics of placing their men-at-arms in the centre of the line with most of the archers slightly forward of them at the wings. The starting positions suggested for the French units mirrored this arrangement. They proposed to draw up their men on foot between the two lines of woodland in two large battalions, a vanguard with some 4,800 men-at-arms and a rearguard behind with another 3,000 men-at-arms. The Constable and the Marshal and almost all the leading noblemen were assigned stations in the vanguard. Two cavalry forces were stationed at the wings, one of 1,600 men under the command of the Count of Vendôme and the other of 800 under Clignet de Bréban and Louis de Bosredon. Their task would be to charge and disperse the English archers opposite them in the opening moments of the battle, thus clearing the way for the heavily armed vanguard to advance against the English ranks where their superior numbers could be expected to prevail. The rearguard, under the command of Robert of Bar Count of Marle, was told to stay with their mounts to serve as a tactical reserve.



9 The battle of Agincourt, 25 October 1415 (conjectural starting positions)

The problem about this plan was that its main lines had been laid down several days before and took little account of the site. The battlefield was essentially a defile between two forests, about 1,200 yards across at its northern end where the French had encamped for the night, narrowing to about 950 yards further south. It had been chosen at the last moment after only limited reconnaissance because it seemed to offer the best prospect of blocking the advance of the English towards Calais. But it had no other advantages. The confined space prevented the French from making effective use of their superior numbers. The dense forest on either side of the defile protected the wings of the English lines and made it difficult to outflank them. A flanking movement by heavy cavalry had originally been planned on the assumption that the battle would be fought in open country. But at Agincourt it was necessary to send the flanking force on a long detour round the forest to attack the English formations in the rear. Pitifully small numbers were assigned to it: just 200 men-at-arms supported by a crowd of *gros varlets* mounted on their masters' horses. The French commanders had no clear plan for deploying the rest of their army. The rearguard received no instructions, and had no leaders, for all of its principal captains including its commander the Count of Marle had insisted on abandoning their companies to fight in the vanguard. The crossbowmen were originally to have been massed at the wings opposite the English archers, but the site was too narrow for them and so they were stationed instead with the rearguard where they were more or less useless. At sunrise on 25 October the French army began to take up its appointed stations. They made an intimidating sight: a forest of lances bearing the banners of several hundred companies. But their formidable aspect masked a disorganised order of battle and the almost complete absence of any proper chain of command.[26]

Some intelligence about earlier versions of the French plan had reached Henry V, probably from prisoners, during the march up the Somme valley. He sent men-at-arms to reconnoitre the field in the light of the moon and the great bonfires lit by the enemy. With this information he began to array his men at dawn. The English army was drawn up like the French across the whole distance between the two lines of woodland. The small force of men-at-arms along with their armed servants and pages was thinly spread, just four ranks deep with no reserve behind them. They were divided into three battalions, one under the King himself in the centre, another on the right wing under his cousin Edward Duke of York, and a third on the left wing under Thomas Lord Camoys, a recently

promoted knight of the Garter then well into his sixties and one of the few men present whose experience of war dated back to the reign of Edward III. The archers were commanded by Sir Thomas Erpingham, another elderly veteran who had fought with John of Gaunt in Castile and with Bolingbroke in Prussia. Erpingham followed the classic English battle plan, stationing most of the archers on the wings slightly forward of the rest of the line from where they would be able to shoot into the French lines from the flanks as they approached. In addition a number of archers were stationed in small groups in the midst of the men-at-arms. Henry V had learned of the French plan to disperse the archers with cavalry. Some days earlier he had ordered every archer to equip himself with a sharpened stake. These were fixed in the ground sloping outward point first in front of the archers' positions. Another 200 archers were concealed in a clearing in the woods of Tramecourt close to the French lines to shoot into their flank as they advanced. The English baggage train was placed to the rear of the lines with the horses, the non-combatants and a small guard in case it was necessary to beat a rapid retreat. Henry himself took up his station in the centre of the line, conspicuous on a white horse, wearing dazzling armour, an armorial surcoat and a basinet with a sequined coronet on top.[27]

The English battle plan relied on the advantages of a strong defensive position and assumed that the enemy would attack first. This is what had happened at Crécy and Poitiers. Henry V deployed his army on the assumption that it would happen at Agincourt. Instead the French stood immobile in their starting positions and waited to be attacked. It was a sound tactical principle. They knew that the English could not afford to wait. They stood in their lines watching the enemy for at least two hours before Henry V, after a hurried conference with his captains, decided to risk making the first move. 'Nowe is good time for alle England prayeth for us and therefore be of gode chere and let us go on our jorney,' he said, according to a London chronicle (or, as another manuscript has it, 'Felas, let's go'). At about ten o'clock in the morning Sir Thomas Erpingham, who was standing at the head of his archers in front of the line, threw his baton in the air as the signal to advance. The banners were raised. The whole English army uttered a great cry and began to advance slowly in formation towards the French lines. Every few steps they paused to recover their formation and let out another great cry before resuming their advance. As soon as the advancing English line came within range of the French the archers planted their stakes in front of them and began to shoot dense volleys of arrows into the French lines. The archers concealed in the

Tramecourt woods joined in from the left of the French line. The French were taken by surprise. They had not expected the English to open the attack so soon. They had not even completed their own dispositions. In particular the two cavalry forces on their wings, which were supposed to open the battle, were still in the process of forming up and many of the men had not yet reached their starting positions. The French plan was critically dependent on disabling the English archers before they were within range. So their commanders were forced to charge at once with whatever men they had. As they did so the vanguard began to advance on foot towards the enemy with a great shout of 'Montjoie', the ancient war-cry of French royal armies.[28]

The opening charge of the French cavalry went badly wrong from the start. There were too many English archers to be run down by a force of a few hundred heavily armed horsemen. As the horsemen came within range Erpingham shouted out the order 'Now strike!' With several thousand archers shooting at once the dense rain of arrows could hardly fail to find targets. Volley after volley of arrows were loosed against the oncoming tide of men and horses. The horses panicked and threw their riders or turned away. Those that reached the English lines shied away from the stakes in the ground or impaled themselves on their sharp points. Shortly, most of the cavalry had turned tail, abandoning their leaders in the midst of the enemy and making headlong back to their own lines. The other cavalry operation to the English rear had been conceived as a spoiling operation designed to disrupt their lines in the critical opening phase of the battle. In the event it did not even achieve that. It was conducted by relatively low-grade cavalry led by three local noblemen and supported by a disorderly mob of *gros varlets* and some 600 peasants from the surrounding villages. They managed to make their way round the forest and appeared behind the English lines. But instead of attacking the enemy they fell on the baggage park and took to looting before making off with their spoils. This included much of the King's baggage including his bedding, his cash chests and one of his crowns.[29]

The French vanguard was already in difficulties. It had to advance across ground which had recently been ploughed up. The rain had turned it into a quagmire through which the men-at-arms, encased in heavy steel or mail, found it hard to move. They had been drawn up in a solid block thirty-one lines deep and crammed into a front too narrow for their vast numbers, making it difficult for them to manoeuvre or maintain their formation. Then, as they struggled forward, the fleeing cavalry collided with them, breaking up their lines and transforming them into a formless mob. The

English archers poured arrows into the flanks of the advancing mass of men. The French were shocked by the ease with which the sharp arrowheads penetrated plate and mail at short range. Some companies tried to retreat in the face of the volleys from the archers but found their escape blocked by the men behind them. As they advanced the field narrowed and the men were so tightly crushed together that they could hardly move or raise their weapons. By the time that they reached the English lines they were exhausted. Their sheer weight of numbers forced the English lines back for several yards before they succeeded in stopping the advance. Forced to a halt by the English men-at-arms, the French front line found itself pushed over and trampled underfoot by the pressure of the men behind them. There was fierce hand-to-hand fighting in the front line. Henry V had to fight for his life, sustaining a blow to his helmet which knocked one of the fleurons off his coronet. The Duke of York was killed in the mêlée on the right wing where some of the toughest fighting occurred. The King's brother Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, wounded and pulled to the ground, was saved from death by Henry himself who shielded him with his own body. But the greater part of the French vanguard was immobilised in the crush and unable to reach the English line. The English, said the chronicler Walsingham, 'wrenched the axes from their hands and slaughtered them like cattle'. The archers, having emptied their quivers, moved in from the wings and attacked them with daggers, hatchets and mallets and weapons scavenged from the bodies on the field. Piles of French dead and wounded some five or six feet high mounted in front of the English lines, which the English began to clamber up in order to attack the advancing ranks behind.

Shortly after midday the force of the French attack failed and the tide turned. The English resumed the offensive, overrunning the remnants of the French vanguard dispersed across the field. At the north end of the field the French rearguard was still intact, standing with their mounts in their starting positions and accompanied by the crossbowmen. They had no orders and almost all their leaders were dead. The English advanced on them and shortly reached their front line. They encountered only perfunctory resistance before the rearguard broke. About 600 men-at-arms of the rearguard were rallied by the Counts of Marle and Faucomberque, who had escaped the carnage. They attempted to disengage and in an act of hopeless heroism charged the English line. Every one of them was killed or captured. The rest mounted their horses, turned and fled the field.[30]

The English had taken few prisoners at the height of the battle. They did not have the numbers to hold them and were afraid that they would rejoin the fray if they were spared. The attack on the

baggage park had added to their nervousness. Most of those who tried to surrender were killed on the spot. But as soon as the fight was over the English set about scavenging the battlefield and pulling the great piles of bodies apart in search of survivors who were worth a ransom. A large number of French soldiers were found alive, some of them badly wounded, some half-suffocated under the weight of the dead and injured. They were disarmed and deprived of their basinets, then led away to holding points at the rear.

While this grim business was in progress there was a sudden alarm in the English ranks. There were reports of fresh French troops. A French standard had been seen raised on the field. The reports were confused and inconsistent and it has never been clear who these troops were. It may have been the company of the Duke of Brittany which had left Amiens that morning, too late to take part in the battle. It may have been the men of the lord of Longny, who was also said to have reached the battlefield with 600 men-at-arms of the Duke of Anjou just as the rearguard was abandoning the field. The most plausible account is that Clignet de Bréban had succeeded in rallying some of the remnants of the rearguard and had appeared in the rear of the English positions before being driven off. The English King, his formations dispersed across the field, was afraid that his small force would be overwhelmed. He ordered all the prisoners to be killed except for a few of the most prominent who had already been removed under guard to a place of safety. Prisoners were despatched in hundreds with a sword to the throat or an axe to the head. Others were battered to death with mallets. The Burgundian Ghillebert de Lannoy was shut with a dozen others in a nearby farmhouse which was set on fire. When some of the captors seemed reluctant to kill men who might bring them a fortune in ransoms, the King sent in a company of archers to finish the job. When it became clear that the French had vanished the panic subsided and the slaughter stopped. The best estimate that can be made is that about 700 prisoners in English hands had been killed. In modern eyes the slaughter has always seemed an act of unchivalrous barbarism. But no one held it against the English at the time, even among their enemies. Indeed the Burgundian herald Jean Le Fèvre, who was with the English army, blamed the French rearguard who, by trying to rally after all was lost, had condemned their companions to a brutal death.[31]

The prisoners who either survived the massacre or were found after it was over included some of the greatest lords of France. Charles of Orléans, who had been trampled underfoot in front of the English centre, was pulled from the mound of bodies. Arthur de Richemont was found by an archer beneath three layers of bodies,

covered in blood and recognisable only by his coat of arms. The Marshal Jean de Boucicaut, the Duke of Bourbon, his cousin Louis Count of Vendôme, who been one of the French ambassadors at Winchester in July, and his stepson Charles Count of Eu, were recognised for the high-ranking figures that they were and escaped the massacre. A few managed to flee when the killing began like Ghillebert de Lannoy, badly wounded in the head and knees, who managed to crawl out of the burning farmhouse where he had been left to die and was recaptured in the fields a short distance away. Most of the others were lucky enough still to be alive when the killing stopped.[32]

The French had suffered a catastrophic defeat. Its measure was the number of casualties. The list of the French dead read like a roll call of the military and political leaders of the past generation. In the failing light after the battle the English archers went through the bodies on the field finishing off the wounded with daggers and stripping the dead. The work was resumed on the following morning. The armorial coats were brought into the English camp to be identified by the heralds. The tally was three dukes, five counts, nearly 100 other great lords and 3,069 knights and squires. At least 2,600 more, who were found without arms to identify them, were included in the body count when the dead were eventually buried. The Duke of Alençon had thrown himself with ferocity into the fight around the English King and had been cut down by one of Henry's bodyguards as he tried to surrender. Anthony Duke of Brabant, John the Fearless's brother, had arrived from Lens in the middle of the battle having ridden ahead of his troops in his riding clothes with only a handful of companions. Putting on borrowed armour and an armorial banner seized from one of his trumpeters, he had joined the fight in its final moments and had been seen among the prisoners after it was all over. But the English did not recognise him in his improvised garb and cut his throat when the cry went up to kill the prisoners. His younger brother, Philip Count of Nevers, was probably also killed in the slaughter of the prisoners.

Their fate was shared by many other great figures. Seven of the French King's cousins were among the dead. The Constable, the Master of the Royal Archers, the Master of the Royal Household and the bearer of the *Oriflamme* of St Denis, in fact every military officer of the Crown was dead except for Marshal Boucicaut who was a prisoner and the Admiral Clignet de Bréban who escaped. Jacques d'Heilly, veteran of campaigns in Scotland and the Gascon march, who had recently broken out of Wisbech castle in England and escaped across the Channel, was found among the dead. Jean de Montaigu, Archbishop of Sens and metropolitan of France, was

felled sword in hand in the midst of the mêlée. No fewer than twelve of the twenty-one provincial *baillis* and seneschals north of the Loire were killed or captured. Entire families were wiped out in the male line, fathers and sons, brothers and cousins. In some regions, notably Picardy from which most of the army's last-minute recruits had come, a whole generation of the territorial nobility was wiped out. The Bourbonnais was described a few years later as 'devoid of knights and squires on account of the day of the English … at which most of them had been killed or captured'.

Towards the end of the afternoon the English King summoned the heralds of both sides, who had watched the battle from a distance. The story of his exchange with Montjoie, the French King of Arms, is probably apocryphal, but would later find its way into the pages of the Picard chronicler Enguerrand de Monstrelet and from him to Shakespeare. The King asked him to confirm the outcome of the battle. 'This day is yours,' the herald answered. Then pointing to the castle standing north-west of the battlefield Henry asked its name and was told that it was called Agincourt. 'Then since battles should be named after the nearest castle, village or town, let this battle for ever more be called the battle of Agincourt.'[33]

The casualties in medieval battles were usually very unequal because most of them occurred at the very end in the pursuit or afterwards as the wounded were finished off on the ground. Estimates of English casualties vary from nine or ten to thirty-three, most of them among the lightly protected archers. A few bodies, including the Duke of York and the young Earl of Suffolk, were brought back to England for burial, but most were collected in a nearby barn which was then torched as the English prepared to resume their march. The French dead were left naked on the battlefield. For days afterwards servants and clerks searched the battlefield looking for their masters among the disfigured corpses. Most of the more famous dead were eventually claimed by their families or carried off for burial a few miles away in the church of the Franciscans of Hesdin. Some 5,800 corpses lay rotting on the ground until eventually three great trenches were dug across the field to receive them.[34]

The first news of the battle reached Rouen on the following morning. The whole court was stunned. The King, the Dauphin and the Duke of Berry wept. They were not alone. 'There is no path or lane, no town or village in France which does not feel the wound,' wrote the young Norman poet Robert Blondel. The immediate reaction to the defeat is painfully reflected in the lamentations of the official historiographer whose work is probably the earliest

French account of the battle. ‘O everlasting shame’, he cried as he described the herding of some of the noblest figures in France ‘like serfs’ into the prisoners’ pens after being defeated by ‘worthless, low-born’ archers. He reviewed the military history of France going back to the Gauls’ attack on ancient Rome to illustrate the scale of the catastrophe. ‘But the worst of it was that France will become the laughing stock of every foreign nation.’ Writing home from Paris the Aragonese ambassador reported that this was the ‘common sentiment here’. Men said that no greater loss, no comparable dishonour had befallen France in a single day for three hundred years.

Shock quickly gave way to recrimination. Public opinion blamed the moral failings of the French nobility just as it had done after the military disasters of the previous century. Moralists blamed the whole mentality of the military class: their love of luxury and vice, their violence against churchmen and women, their blasphemous language, their lust for booty and above all their encouragement of the corrosive divisions of France since the murder of Louis of Orléans. It was a judgment curiously similar to Henry V’s own. ‘I know that God by his grace has given me this victory over the French not for any worth of mine but to punish them for their sins,’ Henry is said to have told his wretched prisoner Charles of Orléans, who was so dejected that he could neither eat nor drink, ‘for if I am rightly informed,’ he continued, ‘there has never been such disorder, hedonism, sinfulness and vice as reigns in our time in France.’ The inclination of so many Frenchmen to accept this verdict infuriated the intensely patriotic royal secretary Jean de Montreuil. Writing within a few weeks of the battle he railed against the prevailing tide of fatalism and self-doubt. England had been conquered by the Romans, the Saxons, the Danes and the Normans ‘but never once since there were kings to defend her has France been conquered by any foreigner’. Sluys, Crécy and Poitiers had been great English victories in their day but the armies and fleets of Charles V had undone them all. Agincourt would be a mere flash in the pan as they had turned out to be. In a chess tournament, said Jean, the winner of twenty games is the champion not the player who can only manage four or five.[35]

The course of the battle itself, once the details became known, seemed to bear out the pessimists. It was generally attributed in France, as it was in England, to the arrogance, treachery, vanity and cowardice of those who were there or should have been. Arrogance had led the commanders in the fateful council of war on the eve of the battle to decide to fight on the following day without waiting for the lowly infantry of the towns and to send all their bowmen to

the rear. Treachery had persuaded John the Fearless and John Duke of Brittany to hold back their troops when they could have brought a decisive accession of strength to the French army. Vanity had propelled all the leading noblemen present to demand a place in the vanguard. But the charge which hurt most was cowardice. For years afterwards those who had fled with the rearguard were discreetly pointed out at gatherings. A year or two after the battle Alain Chartier wrote the *Livre des Quatre Dames*, the first of a number of long poems written at the lowest point of France's fortunes in which he lamented the ills of his country. Which of the four ladies of his title had the greatest cause for grief? All four had lovers or husbands who were present at the battle. One had been killed. The second was a prisoner in England. The third had never been found, one of the thousands of anonymous corpses tipped into the trenches at Agincourt or perhaps held in some nameless English dungeon. But the unhappiest was the wife of the fourth, who had been stationed with the rearguard and left the field without striking a blow, thus condemning the other three to their fate.[36]

These sweeping judgments were unfair, however widely accepted. It was an act of folly to allow the entire leadership of the army to station themselves in the front line, thus ensuring that there would be no overall direction once the battle had started. But the main factors in the defeat were the immense power of massed archers, especially when deployed against cavalry, and the choice of a site which prevented the French from exploiting their numerical superiority. The French certainly did not lack courage. The vanguard threw themselves with heroic fury into the fight and the rearguard only abandoned the field when the battle was already lost. Nor did they lack numbers. They were unable to deploy all the men-at-arms they had and would have gained nothing by waiting for reinforcements. The infantry could have contributed nothing to the strength of the French advance. The crossbowmen were all urban recruits who are unlikely to have been equipped with modern weapons and could never have matched the range or rate of fire of the English longbowmen. They would simply have got in the way, as they had at Crécy seventy years before. Jean de Bueil was only nine years old when his father was killed at Agincourt. But he grew to understand that the failings of the French army were entirely at the level of command. Half a century later, when as a hardened veteran he came to distill a lifetime's experience of war in *Le Jouvencel*, he derived two lessons from the defeat: 'Take up the best position you can as soon as you can,' and 'A dismounted army should always wait for the enemy.'[37]

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The news of the battle, which reached London four days after it was fought, transformed the fortunes of the house of Lancaster. In the first place it put an end to doubts about the durability of the dynasty. We cannot know how many Englishmen agreed with the views attributed to Richard Bruton, the canon of Wells cathedral who was said to have declared ten days before the battle that neither Henry V nor his father had been true kings, that Scrope and the other Southampton plotters had had the right idea and that he (Bruton) would willingly spend his own money to help put the house of Lancaster off the throne. The sentiment was probably common enough to have created serious problems for the King if he had been defeated. As it was, after the battle Bruton was denounced by the papermaker with whom he had shared his thoughts. From time to time malcontents could still be found to appeal to the memory of Richard II, but support for the impostor Thomas Ward became increasingly idiosyncratic even in Scotland. Henry Talbot, the squire who had tried to raise Yorkshire for the Southampton plotters, continued to promote the cause of the Pseudo-Richard and was eventually executed at Tyburn in 1417. Sir John Oldcastle remained on the run until later that year when he was captured on the Welsh march and burned in London, proclaiming to the last his faith in the living Richard. Ward himself died largely forgotten in Stirling castle in 1419. He had no successors. After Agincourt there would still be localised rebellions over specific grievances as there always had been. But the dynasty's legitimacy would not be challenged by a major rebellion until the 1450s.[38]

After thirty years of growing Parliamentary scepticism the battle persuaded Henry V's subjects that the English Crown's long-standing ambitions in France were not only achievable but just. In a letter of congratulation addressed to the King shortly after the battle Chancellor Beaufort compared his nephew to Judas Maccabeus, Saul, David, Solomon and Alexander the Great. 'The winter of sloth and idleness, timidity and folly has passed away and the spring flowers of youth and martial vigour are here … What wise man, I ask, looking back on this campaign, will not stand amazed and attribute it to the power of God himself?' The King, said Beaufort, need have no fears about the availability of funds to complete his work in France. The Commons and the convocations of the Church would sing his praises and open their coffers for the 'Prince of Priests'. And so it proved.

On 4 November 1415 Parliament opened in the Painted Chamber of the Palace of Westminster in an atmosphere of general euphoria.

The King was still at Calais. In his absence his place was taken by his brother John Duke of Bedford, Keeper of England. In an opening address which perfectly captured the abiding themes of Henry V's propaganda, Chancellor Beaufort declared that 'we must honour the King because he has honoured God Almighty'. Beaufort gave a carefully crafted version of what was to become the standard Lancastrian myth, regularly reiterated in Henry's propaganda and in chronicles, poems and songs before it was revived nearly two centuries later in the midst of another great war in Shakespeare's *Henry V*. The whole course of the campaign, said Beaufort, had been the work of God. Forced to resort to war by the deviousness and intransigence of the French, Henry had invaded France and captured Harfleur ('the strongest town in this part of the world') by the grace and favour of God. The Lord had then struck down much of the English army with dysentery and allowed the King to advance with his tiny force into Picardy against the whole chivalry of France so that there could be no doubt that it was by divine intervention that he had triumphed. At length they had reached Calais with 'the greatest honour and profit that the English realm ever had in so short a time'. Now, said Beaufort, it was for his subjects to do their duty. The King's great enterprise having begun so propitiously, they could not allow it to founder for want of money. 'As he did unto us,' intoned the Bishop, 'so let us do unto him.' They responded as Beaufort had predicted in his letter. The second instalment of the subsidy granted at the end of the previous year, which was due to be collected in February 1416, was brought forward to December and a fresh subsidy was granted for collection in November 1416. In addition the Commons made an unprecedented grant of the wool subsidy and the tunnage and poundage duties for the rest of Henry's life, dispensing with any need for further reference to Parliament. Reciting their reasons, the Commons acknowledged the inadequacy of the King's ordinary revenues for the great and just enterprise that he had undertaken and declared their desire to mark the King's 'surpassing courage'. The assembly was dissolved on 13 November after sitting for only a week, one of the shortest and most compliant Parliaments of the fifteenth century. A few days later the convocation of Canterbury matched the Commons' grants with two clerical tenths.[39]

Henry himself landed at Dover on 16 November 1415 and made for the royal manor of Eltham. A week later, on 23 November, the King rode to Blackheath to be received by the Mayor and aldermen of London and several thousand liverymen dressed in red robes with red and white parti-coloured hoods, all bearing the emblems of their trade. At ten o'clock in the morning the King entered the city over

London Bridge. It was the most exuberant royal entry since the return of the Black Prince after the Poitiers campaign more than half a century before. The pageant which greeted him was a visual representation of the themes expounded in the Chancellor's address to Parliament. The city was decked out with giant allegorical figures of David and Goliath and *tableaux vivants* of angels, prophets, apostles and the kings, martyrs and confessors of England. Timber arches and towers adorned the streets. Banners stretched across the carriageways bore mottos repeating the theme of Chancellor Beaufort's address to Parliament: 'Welcome Henry the Fifte, Kinge of England and of Fraunce', 'The city of the King of Justice', 'Honour and glory be to God alone' and even 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord'. The implicit references to Christ entering Jerusalem can have escaped no one. Here was a new England, the chosen instrument of God's will. Henry's claim to divine sanction for his wars was never more clearly asserted than in these extraordinary celebrations.

The King himself played out his role with the sense of theatre that he never lost. Wearing a simple purple gown, his face impassively solemn, he rode through the streets of his capital accompanied by a small entourage comprising the officers of his household, the leading French prisoners and a guard of soldiers. At Cheapside, the broadest open space within the walls, the crowd was so dense that the procession could hardly get past. Sixteen mitred bishops and abbots greeted him at the steps of St Paul's to escort him to make his offering at the high altar. The din of choirs, braying horns and mass cries of 'Noël' was deafening. It took five hours for the King's party to pass through the city from London Bridge to Ludgate and then along the Strand to Westminster.[40]

The lesser French prisoners had almost all been released before the army left Calais. They were ransomed, generally for quite small amounts, or allowed to leave on their parole, or sold to ransom brokers who paid cash up front and took the risks of default. The more valuable and influential captives were brought to England, most of them by the King, who exercised his right to acquire them from their captors. They followed in Henry's footsteps to be exhibited like trophies to the crowds in London and Westminster and to decorate his court at Windsor. The English King had no intention of admitting them to ransom until it suited him politically. He kept them in England for use as bargaining counters in future dealings with the French. None of them was destined to be released in Henry's lifetime apart from Arthur de Richemont, who would be paroled in exceptional circumstances in 1420.

Shortly before Christmas 1415 Raoul de Gaucourt and other

prisoners of Harfleur were incarcerated in the Tower of London. The Dukes of Orléans and Bourbon, Arthur de Richemont, the Counts of Vendôme and Eu and Marshal Boucicaut enjoyed a better fate, at least initially. They were moved to and fro between the Tower, the Palace of Westminster and Windsor castle, where they appear to have been accommodated in comfort and allowed some freedom of movement. Some of them had relatives or friends in England, like Charles of Orléans, whose brother John had been a hostage for the performance of the treaty of Buzançais since 1412, and Arthur de Richemont, whose mother the dowager Queen, widow of Henry IV, sent him gifts of money and clothing. They were all rich men, apart perhaps from Boucicaut, with the resources to soften the hardships of captivity. They summoned their own servants from France to attend to their comforts. They paid for friends and counsellors to visit them. Charles of Orléans maintained an account with a Florentine banker in London into which large sums were transferred by his staff at Blois. He brought over books for his library, gold and silver plate for his table, chandeliers for his rooms and linen for his bed as well as an ample French-speaking secretarial staff with which he endeavoured to run his domains from England. The Duke of Bourbon, a man of more worldly tastes, brought over his huntsmen and falconers, his hawks and his hounds and whole shiploads of wine. None of this, however, was likely to compensate for the boredom of confinement or disguise their fallen status. Men who had been among the great political figures of France were now condemned to become distant and impotent witnesses of the great events unfolding there. The Duke of Orléans was destined to remain in captivity for a quarter of a century. The poems which he wrote from his prison are filled with a melancholy regret for the lost years, ‘banished from the house of Love, struck out of the book of Joy’. ‘I am the heart shrouded in black,’ he sang.[41]

Notes

1
Gesta, 20–4; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 82–3; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 37–8.

2
Gesta, 26, 68; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 556; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 292. Ordinances: *Nicolas (1833), App. VIII.

3
Gesta, 26–30. Topography: E. Dumont and A. Leger, *Histoire de la ville d’Harfleur* (1868), 62–80.

4
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 532–6; *Inv. AC Toulouse*, i, 187–8 (AA37/38, 40); *Vaissète, x, 1079–83. Dispositions, Valognes: BN Clair. 20, p. 1440, 43/3181, 58, p. 4461, 105/32, 106/117, etc. Carentan: BN Clair. 33, p. 2468, 55, p. 4180, 102/129, etc. Honfleur: BN Clair. 9, p. 519, 14, p. 908,

76, p. 4961, etc. Caen: BN Clair. 21, p. 1512, 51, fol. 3889vo. Montivilliers: BN Clair. 5, p. 241, 26, p. 1897. Harfleur: BN Clair. 21, p. 1480, 52, p. 3969.

5

Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 40–1; *Gesta*, 26, 32–4, 54; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 83–4; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 666. Prefabricated bridge: PRO E364/57, m. 3d (Janyn). Small boats: *Gesta*, 34, 42. French ships: *Doc. Clos des Galées*, nos 1648–9, 1661; BN Fr. 26040/4971; BN Fr. n.a. 7624, fols 335–336vo.

6

Gesta, 34, 36, 38; *Mems. London*, 619; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 536. Gunners: PRO E101/45/5.

7

Gesta, 38–42; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 536–8; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 41–4; Livius, *Vita*, 9–10; 'Procès Fusoris', 208–9.

8

Early operations: BN PO 716/Chaumont/27, 717/Chaumont/135–6, 497/Brederode/2; BN Clair. 23, pp. 1659, 1669, 50, p. 3783, 59, p. 4511, 76, p. 5919, 102, p. 115, 114, p. 159, etc.; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 83–5. Summons: BN Fr. n.a. 7624, fols 338–349vo; BL Add. Chart. 3464; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 90–2. Alençon: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 292. Ships: *Doc. Clos des Galées*, nos 1652, 1654–60, 1662–5; BN Fr. n.a. 7624, fols 335–336vo; BN PO 573/de Calleville/41–2 (Brittany), 496/Bréban/30. Diverting Lézarde: *Reg. Jurade,* ii, 257–8. Message: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 292, 294; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 540; *Coll. doc. Angleterre*, 217–18.

9

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 538–42; *Mems. London*, 619; *Brut*, ii, 376–7; 553–4; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 666–70; *Gesta*, 44–50; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 295; Gregory, 'Chron.', 109–11. Ships: *Doc. Clos des Galées*, nos 1655, 1664–5; BL Add. Chart. 11433. Dauphin's numbers estimated from the vast collection of pay receipts from the archives of the Chambre des Comptes in the Pièces Originales, Coll. Clairambault and Pièces Diverses collection of the BN (Paris). It is impractical to give references.

10

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 85, 94; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 295; *Chrons London,* 118–19; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 670; *Gesta*, 52–6; *Mems. London*, 619; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* v, 542–4; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 227, 229.

11

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 542–4; *Gesta*, 44, 50, 58–60; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 85; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 44, 49–50; Strecche, 'Chron.', 152; *Reg. Jurade*, ii, 257–8. For the numbers accompanying the King, I have followed the well-informed author of *Gesta* who was with Henry's household on the march. Curry (2005), 131, gives 'at least' 8,680, but this figure is arrived at by deducting (i) those recorded in the pay records as dead or sick and (ii) those assigned to the garrison of Harfleur from (iii) those known to have set out from England in August. The records for (ii) are complete and for (iii) almost so, but we have only partial lists for (i). Her figure is therefore too high.

12

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 526–30; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 291; *Foed.*, ix, 313 (16, should be 26 Sept.); *Gesta*, 56–60.

13

BN Fr. 26040/4974, 4980; *Journ. B. Paris*, 62.

14

*Finot, 102–6; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 584; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 292, 293, 298–302, 304, 305, 308–9; *Plancher, iii, nos 297, 299 (correct date is 24 Sept.), 300; *Itin. Jean,* 420; AD Côte d'Or B11894 (Rouvres exchange).

15

Reports of English plans: *Reg. Rec. Boulogne*, 91, 91–2, 92. Paris reinforced: BN PO 624/de Caure/2, 4, 1231/de Frampas/4; 1802/Mailly/333, 2317/de Poix/3, 2359/le Poulailler/3, 2778/de St-Ullien/2–3, 2036/Montormantier/2–3, 2492/de Rissey/2–3, 3041/Voy/6–7, etc.; BN Clair. 175/61, etc. French advance to Somme: *Phillpotts (1984), 64–6; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* v, 550; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 96; *Acta Concilii,* iv, no. 463; Cagny, *Chron.*, 17–18, 97–8; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 65. Rouen: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 296–7. English balked: *Reg. Rec. Boulogne*, 92; *Inv. AC Amiens*, ii, 19; *Gesta*, 60–4; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 232–3; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 52; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 544.

16

Gesta, 64–8; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 233–4; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 96–7.

17

Gesta, 70–4; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 234–5; Cagny, *Chron.*, 98; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 97; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* v, 550.

18

Dauphin: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 296–7. Berry: BN Fr. 20368, fol. 27. Anjou: AN KK243, fol. 46vo. Bourbon, Bar, Nevers: La Mure, ii, 130n; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 66. Orléans: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 93. D. of Burgundy: BN Coll. Bourgogne 57, fol. 81vo; AD Côte d'Or B11894; AD Nord B17618, 17620; Waurin, *Rec. cron.,* ii, 185–6. Charolais: *Handelingen (1405–19)*, no. 626; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 98–100; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 238–40. John V: *Foed.*, ix, 80–5; *Itin. Jean*, 420; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 313–14; Cagny, *Chron.*, 101.

19

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 97–8; Cagny, *Chron.*, 98–9; Fenin, *Mém.*, 61; Waurin, *Rec. cron.*, ii, 194; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 66–7; Dynter, *Chron.*, iii, 298; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 313–14; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 238; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 16–18. Orléans joined in the challenge to Henry V on 20 Oct. (Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 236) but not the letter of 19 Oct. to Anthony of Brabant (Dynter, *Chron.*, iii, 298). St-Malo: *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 924–5.

20

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 98–100, 102; Dynter, *Chron.*, iii, 298–300; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 238–9; Cagny, *Chron.*, 102; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 312, 314; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 67; *Inv. AC Amiens*, ii, 19 (towns). Numbers on 19 Oct.: BN Fr. 25709/726. Numbers at 25 Oct.: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 314; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 68–70; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 546 (wrongly suggesting that they had all been with the King at Rouen). These figures are broadly consistent with what can be deduced from the fragmentary pay records: Curry (2005), 185–7.

21

Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 236–7; *Gesta*, 74; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 55; Elmham, 'Lib. Metr.', 117–18; *Gesta*, 74–6. Calais: PRO E403/622, m. 1 (15 Oct.), countermanded on 25th, ibid.; *Reg. Rec. Boulogne*, 123 (Clarence).

22

Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 66–7; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 240–1; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 56; *Gesta*, 76.

23

Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 243; *Gesta*, 78–80.

24

Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 93–4; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 243–4, 247, 251–2; *Gesta*, 78; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 554.

25
'Chron. Cordeliers', 228–9; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 311.

26
Early plans: Phillpotts (1984), 62–3, *64–6; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 313–14. Final plan: Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 68–70 (the most detailed account, but giving Richemont instead of Clignet de Bréban); Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 311–12, 314; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 248–9; Fenin, *Mem.*, 64; *Gesta*, 80–2 (exaggerating numbers); 'Geste des nobles', 156. Other accounts record the division of the French into three, not two battalions, but this accords less well with the subsequent course of the battle. If there were once three battalions (which would have been traditional), then at some stage the vanguard and main army were merged.

27
Gesta, 68–70, 82–4; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 59–61, 62; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 105; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 244–5.

28
Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 63–4; *Gesta*, 82–4, 86; *Brut*, ii, 378–9; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 105–6; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 253–4; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 312; Dynter, *Chron.*, iii, 300–1. Henry's order: *Brut*, ii, 378; BL Harley 565, fol. 110, quoted in Allmand (1992), 91.

29
Gesta, 84–6; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 63; *Brut*, ii, 596–7; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 106–9; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 254–6; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 560; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 314–4; Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 678; *Foed.*, ix, 356–7.

30
Gesta, 86–8, 88, 96; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 67; Livius, *Vita*, 17, 19–20; *Brut*, ii, 379, 555; Elmham, 'Lib. Metr.', 122; Usk, *Chron.*, 256; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 108–10; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 252–3, 254, 255–6; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 560–4; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 312, 315; Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 678–82; Fenin, *Mém.*, 63–4.

31
Gesta, 90–2; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 256–9; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 102–3, 109–10, 120; *Brut*, ii, 379; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 312; Dynter, *Chron.*, iii, 301–2; 'Chron. Ruisseauville', 140; Lannoy, *Oeuvres*, 50. Numbers: total of 1,400 captured as reported by the heralds to Charles VI (*Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 574), of whom 700 survived (Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 682).

32
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 260, 261; Gruel, *Chron.*, 18; *Gesta*, 90; *Brut*, ii, 557; Lannoy, *Oeuvres*, 50.

33
Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 680; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 110–20, 122; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 570–2; Dynter, *Chron.*, iii, 301; 'Chron. Ruisseauville', 140; *Brut*, ii, 555–7; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 259; *CPR 1413–16*, 410 (Heilly's escape); Demurger, 178 (*baillis*); Leguai (1969), 324 (Bourbonnais).

34
Dynter, *Chron.*, iii, 302–3; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 121–2; 'Chron. Ruisseauville', 142; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 122. Hesdin: Curry (2005), 232.

35
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 562–4, 568–70, 574–80; Blondel, *Oeuvres*, i, 127; Montreuil, *Opera*, ii, 153–6. Aragonese: *Acta Concilii*, iv, no. 463. Henry V: Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 261.

36
Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 313; Chartier, *Poetical Works,* 198–304.
37
Bueil, *Jouvencel*, ii, 63.
38
News: *Mems. London*, 620–1. Bruton: PRO KB9/208/97, cited in **Gesta*, 190. The charges appear to have been dropped, for Bruton became vicar-general of the Bishop of London: see *Rec. Convoc.*, v, 38–9; *Reg. Chichele*, iii, 22–3. Ward: Strohm, 119–20; *Select Cases*, vii, 236–9; *Parl. Rolls*, ix, 212 [11]; Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 726–30; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 28, 114.
39
Letters Margaret of Anjou, no. 1; *Parl. Rolls*, ix, 114–15, 116–19 [1, 4–5]; *Rec. Convoc.*, v, 18.
40
Gesta, 100–12, *191–2; *Lettres des rois*, ii, 336–9; Brut, ii, 380; Gregory, 'Chron.', 112–13; Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, 684; Usk, *Chron.*, 258–62; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 71–3.
41
Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 262–3; Wylie and Waugh, ii, 249, 251–2; *Issues Exch.*, 344, 344–5; PRO E403/624, m. 1 (30 Apr.) (prisoners of Harfleur). Conditions: Gruel, *Chron.*, 19–20; Foed., ix, 320–2, 327, 331, 334, 336, 337, 339, 360, 369, 422, 446, 453, 625–6, 675; Champion (1969), 162, 668. Orléans: BN PO 985/Davy/49, 1109/Fauve/2, 1845/Mardon/2, 2089/Nantel/2, 2235/Perrier/19–20; BL Add. Chart. 266, 267. Bourbon: PRO C76/99, m. 32. Charles of Orléans, Ballades, no. 18, Chansons, no. 23 (*Poésies*, 36, 217).

CHAPTER XII

The Count of Armagnac, 1415–1417

The immediate threat to the French government, once the English army had reached Calais, came from the Duke of Burgundy. John the Fearless was genuinely shocked by the outcome of the battle of Agincourt. He had lost both of his brothers in the slaughter as well as many of his retainers and friends who had joined the French army in defiance of his orders. But shock quickly gave way to calculation as the political implications sank in. The defeat had discredited the Armagnac faction and wiped out its leadership. Its political figurehead was a prisoner. All its most prominent supporters had been killed or captured with the exception of the Count of Armagnac, who had been left to defend the march of Gascony and only learned of the disaster in November. This left as the standard-bearers of the Armagnac cause only the aged Duke of Berry and the sickly Duke of Anjou. John the Fearless saw the chance to step into the political vacuum. As soon as he had digested the first reports he began to recruit an army. The nobility of Burgundy were summoned to muster in the middle of November at Châtillon-sur-Seine on the northern march of the duchy. His marshal was sent into Champagne to muster his retainers there. The professed object of this mobilisation was to defend Charles VI against the army of Henry V. But it was obvious that the Duke's real purpose was to march on Paris while the political situation was still fluid. On 10 November 1415 he arrived at Châtillon. A week later on the 17th he began his advance on the capital, pausing at intervals to allow reinforcements to join him from across eastern France. With him marched much of the old Cabochian leadership of Paris: Elyon de Jacqueville, Eustache de Laitre, Jean de Troyes and the chiefs of the butchers and *écorcheurs*, Saint-Yon, Chaumont and Caboche, men whose very presence at his side was calculated to antagonise the more moderate elements in the city. [1]

That the French government recovered its balance so quickly was due mainly to the energy of the Dauphin Louis of Guyenne. As soon as he learned of the Duke of Burgundy's mobilisation he sent a delegation before him. If his object was really to defend France against Henry V, they were instructed to say, then he should make for Calais where the English army was encamped. He would be

appointed as royal lieutenant in Picardy to give him the necessary powers. His bluff called, John the Fearless replied that that would not be good enough. He wanted a personal meeting with Louis. The Dauphin summoned all the noblemen and royal officers who could be found to a great council at Rouen. By the time it met the English army was known to be reembarking at Calais. They approved a declaration, which was issued in the King's name on 15 November, that adequate steps were already in hand to defend the frontiers and no further troops were needed. The only threat to the realm came from within. Orders were given to defend every town and river crossing on the main approaches to Paris against the Duke. Any bridges which could not be properly guarded were to be demolished. All river craft were to be scuttled or brought into the nearest walled town. Tanneguy du Châtel was actively organising the defence of Paris. He summarily sacked the Provost of the Merchants and all the *échevins*, replacing them with creatures of his own, some of whom were not even Parisians. The gates were walled up. Some 1,200 men-at-arms and 900 crossbowmen were recruited to defend the city, mostly drawn from companies of Gascon and Breton *routiers*.

The main gap in the government's defences was at the level of command. There was nobody about the Dauphin with the military reputation to confront the experienced and skilful Duke of Burgundy. It was therefore decided to offer the vacant office of Constable to Bernard Count of Armagnac. It cannot have been an easy decision. The Count was known to be a difficult and authoritarian figure. But he was 'strong-minded, wise and brave', the only outstanding captain of high rank who was available. Two emissaries were sent to the south-west to press him to come urgently to Paris bringing with him as many troops as he could muster.[2] The citizenry of Paris, most of whom were strong supporters of the Duke of Burgundy, looked on sullenly. On 29 November 1415 the King returned to the city. He made a sorry spectacle coming through the Porte Saint-Honoré dressed in filthy old clothes with his hair down to his shoulders and meanly accompanied by a handful of Gascon bodyguards. In the aftermath of Agincourt no one could bring themselves to celebrate his entry in the traditional way. There were no municipal officers or liveried tradesmen to greet him, no princes and noblemen to ride beside his carriage, no crowds to shout 'Noël!' as he made his way across the city back to the Hôtel Saint-Pol.[3]

The Dauphin made his own entry on the following day. He brought with him the remnants of the defeated army and some of the Breton companies who had been at Rouen and Amiens with the

Duke of Brittany. Louis of Guyenne had always worked for an accommodation between the parties and was willing to compromise with the Duke of Burgundy in spite of the ill-feeling between the two men. He offered to ease his financial difficulties with a pension of 80,000 *écus* a year. He said that he would admit four of his nominees to the royal council. He was even prepared to admit him to Paris provided that he disbanded his army and came with no more than a civil retinue. But John the Fearless expected to do better than that. A meeting was set up for 11 December at Meaux on the Marne east of Paris, at which John could press his demands on the Dauphin and the Dukes of Berry and Brittany. But the meeting never took place. On 5 December the Duke's confidant Regnier Pot, accompanied by a delegation of Burgundian officials, came before the royal council in the Hôtel de Bourbon in Paris. Pot, a Poitevin by birth, had been in the service of the dukes of Burgundy for thirty years and was becoming John's agent of choice for difficult missions of this kind. His master, said Pot, would not disband his army in advance of the negotiations and would not enter Meaux without a large armed escort. His status as a royal prince demanded nothing less. The Dauphin turned this demand down flat. As a loyal subject of the King, he replied, the Duke would enter French cities with his civil household or not at all. Pot offered him the Duke's written oath to conduct himself properly. If that was not enough he would surrender his son Philip of Charolais as a hostage. But all trust had vanished by now and that too was turned down. The Dauphin's chancellor Jean de Vailly returned with Pot and his companions to reinforce the message. He presented John with an ultimatum in the King's name. If the Duke came any closer to Paris he would be treated as a traitor. By this time John had reached Provins in Brie. Brushing aside the Dauphin's threats he continued his advance.[4]

On 10 December 1415 the Duke of Burgundy entered Lagny, a walled town on the Marne just twenty miles from Paris. There he was reinforced by contingents drawn from his retainers in Artois and Picardy. His ally the Duke of Lorraine joined him with his own troops, bringing his total strength to somewhere between 3,000 and 5,000 men. Over the next few weeks they spread themselves out in a broad arc on the east side of Paris from the Oise in the north to the Seine in the south, leaving a trail of looted villages and farms behind them. In the city tensions rose and extravagant rumours circulated. The watch arrested a pastrycook in the butchers' quarter. He had sent a young boy out of the city with a message urging the Duke to come quickly to the Porte de Montmartre or the Porte Saint-Honoré, where 5,000 men were said to be ready to rise up and

open the gates for him. The pastrycook, who was probably a fantasist, was beheaded at Les Halles. A large number of people suspected of Burgundian sympathies were rounded up and thrown into prison. There were rumours in the streets that the government planned to murder other sympathisers in the event that John the Fearless tried to force an entrance. The city authorities were said to have collected 4,000 axes for the task, their blades blackened so as to be invisible at night. Many Parisians believed this nonsense. In the Bernardine convent and the monastery of Saint-Martin-des-Champs the monks kept watch all night in front of their fires in case the assassins should come for them. Cries of 'For the Dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy' were heard in the darkened streets.[5]

With an army at his back, the leading Armagnacs dead or languishing in English prisons, and the French government in the hands of pragmatic moderates, the Duke of Burgundy might well have negotiated his way back to power even if he had to share it with others. But a succession of events now combined to frustrate his calculations. The first and most unexpected was the death of the Dauphin. Louis of Guyenne had contracted dysentery, probably on the march back from Rouen. On arriving in Paris he had thrown himself into the management of the crisis and refused all medication. On 7 December he was forced to take to his bed. On the 10th and 12th he dragged himself from his quarters to preside over crisis meetings of the royal council. By the 18th he was dead. He was not yet nineteen years old. Louis left few friends to mourn him. His funeral in Notre-Dame was a mean affair, attended by the prelates who were in Paris and a large body of officials but few noblemen. The short obituary in the chronicle of Saint-Denis, which condemned him as an indolent hedonist and compared him unfavourably to Henry V, has became the orthodoxy of generations of historians. 'Grandiloquent, idle, useless, inactive and timid', was the verdict of an Armagnac writer. But few men can be expected to show their mettle before they are nineteen and Louis deserved better than this. His had been one of the few voices to be raised in favour of moderation and compromise, and he died at the moment when he was maturing into a shrewd and effective politician. His disappearance at this point was a misfortune of incalculable moment for France. The King was now almost permanently incoherent. Of his six sons only two were still living, neither of whom was in a position to step into the shoes of Louis of Guyenne.[6]

The older of them was John Duke of Touraine, who now became Dauphin of France at the age of seventeen. Very little was known about him in Paris. He had been betrothed as a child to Jacqueline, the daughter and heiress of William of Bavaria Count of Hainaut,

and had been expected in due course to succeed to William's extensive domains in the Low Countries. In preparation for this event John had been brought up for the past nine years at his father-in-law's court at the sumptuous castle of Le Quesnoy in Hainaut. He was a sickly young man without political experience and almost entirely ignorant of the factional politics of the French court. His acts were controlled by his father-in-law. William of Bavaria was viewed with mixed feelings in Paris. He was the Duke of Burgundy's brother-in-law and had once been among his closest political allies. He was certainly no friend of the Armagnacs. The royal council was therefore keen to take possession of the young prince out of his hands. He had passed the age at which by tradition French princes could exercise power. Along with the Queen he was the only legitimate source of political authority during the now almost continuous 'absences' of Charles VI.

So Louis of Guyenne was no sooner buried than the royal council sent a deputation to discuss the situation with his successor in Hainaut and to bring him back to Paris. It was led by that firm Armagnac partisan Raoul de Gaucourt the Elder. For his part John the Fearless was determined to keep the new Dauphin out of his enemies' hands. When the Parisian deputation arrived they found that the Burgundian emissaries had got there first. They were unable to interview the prince except in the presence of John's councillors and when they eventually obtained access to him they were told that he intended to stay where he was. The Armagnacs feared that John the Fearless was planning to return to Paris on the new Dauphin's coat-tails. They were certainly right about this. John may even have hoped that the Dauphin would join him at Lagny. But for the moment the designs of both sides were frustrated by William of Bavaria. William was unwilling to allow his son-in-law to become the tool of either party. He set him up with an independent household worthy of his new status, with his own chancellor, treasurer, almoner, eight secretaries, ten *maîtres d'hôtel* and a full staff of bodyguards, household officers, chaplains, valets, pages and messengers. Officials were sent to secure the substantial revenues of the Dauphiné on his behalf. A great seal was made with which to authenticate his documents. The new Dauphin's few public acts showed a studied neutrality. He sent emissaries to Paris at the end of January 1416 with letters ordering both sides to lay down their arms. He declined to attend a personal meeting with John the Fearless just as he had declined to go to Paris with the lord of Gaucourt. It was no longer clear who could claim to speak with the authority of the Crown.[7]

Within days of the former Dauphin's death any prospect of a deal

with John the Fearless vanished. On 29 December Bernard of Armagnac arrived in the capital and on the following day he was sworn as Constable. Armagnac brought with him from the south more than a thousand hired *routiers* from Gascony, Provence and Spain and several hundred crossbowmen. Once the Bretons and Gascons already in the city were transferred to his command he disposed of a total force of some 2,000 men and 1,000 crossbowmen. The new Constable had no interest in a negotiated settlement with the Duke of Burgundy. He was a brutal, self-confident and uncompromising party leader, filled with the rancours of the past six years. He surrounded himself with professional captains like the Breton Tanneguy du Châtel and the Gascon *routier* Ramonet de la Guerre, outsiders like himself: 'foreigners, bad men without pity', a Parisian chronicler noted with disgust; 'not proper Frenchmen', agreed the Burgundian chronicler Pierre Fenin.

The Count of Armagnac quickly achieved a dominant position on the royal council. He was appointed as the King's lieutenant-general throughout France with control of all royal troops and a right of passage through every town, castle, bridge or port in the land. The whole civil and financial administration was placed at his disposal, a greater concentration of power than anyone had enjoyed since the heyday of Louis of Orléans. Armed with the King's ordinances he set about reshaping the administration in his own image, inaugurating a wholesale purge of officials who were thought to favour the Duke of Burgundy and installing his collaborators in all the main strategic fortresses around Paris. There was no one to challenge him. The official element on the council was cowed. The Duke of Berry, weary and bowed with age and with only six months to live, was the Count's father-in-law and depended on him to defend his interests in Languedoc. The Duke of Anjou, affable, ineffectual and vacillating, was too ill and too frightened of John the Fearless to take an active role and anyway spent long periods away from Paris. The Queen ostensibly enjoyed extensive powers as regent under the ordinances. But her health was also poor, and with little influence in the council and no popular following outside she was progressively marginalised. The one man with the stature and ability and the military strength to claim a share of power was John Duke of Brittany. He was a genuine advocate of peace. But his interests were centred in his duchy and he was never willing to spare the time, effort or resources to build up a political following in Paris. He remained in contact with all the rival factions as well as with the King of England and made several attempts to broker a peace between them. As a result he was never entirely trusted by anyone.[8]

The immediate consequence of Bernard of Armagnac's assumption of power was a sharp deterioration in the government's already tense relations with the Parisians. The Count was a military dictator. His government depended for its legitimacy on its physical control over the inert person of Charles VI and on the decisions of a royal council acting practically independently of the King. He was the head of a party detested in the streets and garrets. His use of the city as the base for what amounted to a large standing army was strongly resented. Whole districts in the north of the city around the Temple and the abbey of St Martin were taken over as billets for his soldiers, and their inhabitants expelled to find shelter where they might. The garrison's regular *chevauchées* into the Île de France combined with the operations of the Duke of Burgundy to disrupt the fragile network of road and river routes which kept the city supplied. Prices rose to fresh heights in the markets. The mounting burden of war taxation, which bore especially heavily on the capital, provoked much anger among a population already badly affected by the insecurity of the roads, the decline of the luxury trades and the departure of the princely courts. As the frustration of the inhabitants mounted the royal council and its stooges in the municipality aggravated the situation by resorting to new measures of surveillance and repression. The citizens were forbidden to assemble or bear arms in the street. Guards occupied the bridges and crossroads, stopping anyone whose behaviour aroused suspicion. Dissent was silenced by frequent arrests and occasional executions. The government did not forget the events of May 1413, when the Cabochians had invaded the Hôtel Saint-Pol and forced their programme on the King. Charles VI was kept under close guard by a large contingent of Gascon soldiers and was eventually moved into bleak but secure new quarters in the royal Palace on the Cité.[9]

The change of government in Paris brought the negotiations with the Duke of Burgundy to a halt. Regnier Pot, who was in the city with a group of Burgundian councillors when the Dauphin's death was announced, hung around for a few days to follow developments and then left hurriedly for Lagny. The next Burgundian embassy to enter the city, in the second week of January, was received by the government with undisguised hostility. Armed guards were placed outside their lodgings to prevent them from speaking to the Parisians. The council seems to have refused them an audience. Instead, they sent Jean de Vailly back to Lagny with another demand that the Duke of Burgundy should disband his army, but he was kept hanging about for several days and then sent away without even being allowed to deliver his message. The Duke of

Brittany arrived in Paris in the middle of January in the hope of brokering a compromise. It was an honourable but ill-starred venture. John V found himself cold-shouldered by both sides. He did go to Lagny to talk to the Duke of Burgundy but found him too angry to be capable of reasoned discussion.

By this time the Constable had already decided to resolve matters by force. This he achieved with characteristic efficiency in the second half of January 1416. Accompanied by Ramonet de la Guerre he led a large mounted force north towards Compiègne to clear the Burgundians from the plain between the Marne and the Oise. The Duke of Burgundy's troops were by now scattered over a large area and their discipline had largely broken down as a result of the Duke's inability to pay them. The only concerted resistance came from a force of some 600 men-at-arms under two prominent Burgundian captains, Ferri de Mailly and Martelet du Mesnil, which was cornered near the village of Santers. Almost all of them were killed or captured. The two captains were taken into Compiègne and Martelet du Mesnil was later drawn and hanged at the gates along with a number of other well-born prisoners. The Constable had no time for chivalrous courtesies to men whom he regarded as traitors. On 28 January John the Fearless abandoned his campaign. He allowed his army to pillage Lagny and then withdrew to Artois with the mounted detachments of the Constable snapping at his heels.[10]

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The new government now turned its thoughts to the looming threat from England. In the aftermath of the battle of Agincourt there had been tentative suggestions of a fresh diplomatic conference. But the auguries were not good. Henry V was keen to negotiate but only because he was convinced that the French would now concede his demands. In fact the battle made a settlement all but impossible. Henry's victory had been too complete for compromise, his propaganda too extreme for a climb-down. Shortly, prisoners began to return from England on parole with reports of extensive military preparations for a fresh invasion of France in the following year.[11] The French royal council was wary of negotiating directly with Henry V after their previous experience of his diplomatic methods. But they were desperate to avoid another invasion and searched about for a suitable intermediary. The intermediary who presented himself was the German King Sigismund of Luxembourg. Although his efforts ultimately came to nothing they were destined to have a significant impact on the plans of both sides.

Sigismund was last German King of the house of Luxembourg and the hereditary ruler of Hungary. He had been chosen as King of

the Romans (the formal title of the German kings) by a minority of the electors in September 1410 and then by the whole electoral body in the following July after a decade of civil war. He came to the throne at a low point in the fortunes of the German Reich, a fragmented polity sustained by memory and myth but without financial or military resources of its own and with very little in the way of central institutions. The Low Countries and the Rhineland had gradually seceded from the Empire and moved into the political orbit of France, while its eastern territories lived under the shadow of the Ottoman Turks in the Balkans and the renascent Poles and Lithuanians of the Baltic. South of the Alps the Holy Roman Empire clung to the shadow of its former status as real power passed to the despots and city-states of northern Italy and the aggressive Neapolitan kingdom of the house of Durazzo. Sigismund had experienced these problems at first hand. He had led the international army which was destroyed by the Turks at Nicopolis in 1396. Most of his long life was devoted to the quixotic attempt to revive the power and prestige of the Holy Roman Empire and unify Christendom against the Turks. It was a Sisyphean task for which Sigismund was ill-suited. He was energetic and determined but perennially short of money and a poor diplomat: impulsive, tactless and naive. Sigismund had an exalted idea of his office. Like most vain men, he was easily flattered and manipulated.

Sigismund's main objective in these early years was to heal the papal schism, which he regarded as the essential preliminary to any coordinated Christian effort against the Turks. In 1409 a council of the Latin Church meeting at Pisa under the auspices of cardinals from both the Roman and the Avignon obedience had decreed the deposition of both Popes and elected a new one in their place, Alexander V. This first attempt to unite the western Church under a single spiritual authority had failed. The decrees of the Council of Pisa were recognised in most of Europe, but the aged Avignon Pope Benedict XIII ignored them and withdrew to the remote coastal fortress of Peñiscola in Aragon, where he continued to command the allegiance of the Spanish kingdoms and Scotland. Much of Italy continued to acknowledge the Roman Pope Gregory XII. When Alexander V died within a year of his election he was succeeded by Balthasar Cossa, who took the name John XXIII. He was an unedifying Italian adventurer who was poorly placed to rally the recalcitrant countries behind him. Sigismund determined from the outset of his reign to put an end to this state of affairs. His chosen instrument was a new General Council at which the whole of the Latin Church would be represented. In October 1413, proclaiming himself 'advocate and defender of the Holy Church', he announced

that the Council would open under his own auspices on 1 November 1414 at Constance, an imperial city in southern Germany. To make the Council effective Sigismund needed to win the support of the major states of Europe, in particular France and England. The chief obstacles in his way were the civil war in France and its continuing conflict with England.[12]

The house of Luxembourg had traditionally been close to France. Sigismund's grandfather had died a famous death fighting in the ranks of the French army at Crécy. His father, the Emperor Charles IV, had been brought up at the French court and had been a friend of France throughout his long reign. But much had changed since Charles's death in 1378. The papal schism had driven a wedge between France and Germany, as the Empire joined with England in acknowledging the Roman Pope while the French backed their own candidate at Avignon. The breach was widened by the deteriorating situation on the fringes of the Reich. The encroachments of the French royal house into the German lands of the Moselle valley and the Low Countries were a constant irritant and a barrier to Sigismund's pan-German ambitions. French claims to Genoa were a standing defiance of his pretensions to rebuild imperial power in northern Italy. Sigismund had a particular resentment of the house of Burgundy, mainly because of the position of John the Fearless's younger brother Anthony, who was perhaps the extreme case of a French prince intruded into a German territory. Anthony's right to Brabant, which was derived from agreements made with the duchy's previous ruling family, had never been recognised by the German kings. His effective annexation of Luxembourg aroused Sigismund's special ire since it had so recently belonged to his own family. The German King enjoyed better relations with the Armagnacs. He had entered into a personal alliance with Charles of Orléans immediately after John the Fearless's fall from power in August 1413 and then with the government of Charles VI in the following June. But his dealings with them were clumsy and based on a complete misapprehension of the situation in France after the collapse of the Cabochian revolution. He believed that the Burgundian cause was lost and that the civil war in France could best be brought to an end by the destruction of John the Fearless. In addition to contributing to the peace of western Europe this would, he thought, enable him to recover control of Luxembourg for his family and regain Brabant for the Reich. At one point he even proposed a three-way alliance of France, Germany and England to share out the spoils of the Burgundian state between them. The peace of Arras and its eventual ratification in Paris in March 1415 rudely awoke him from these dreams. By now it was clear that any

scheme for a general European peace would have to involve the Duke of Burgundy as well as England and France. The death of Anthony of Brabant at Agincourt smoothed the way to a reconciliation with the house of Burgundy by removing the most obvious source of discord.[13]

By comparison with the Empire's awkward and distant dealings with France and Burgundy, relations with England were closer than they had been for more than a century. Richard II had married Sigismund's sister Anne of Bohemia. Before his accession Henry IV had twice participated in the campaigns of the Teutonic Knights in Prussia and when he became king he married his daughter Blanche to the son of the Emperor Ruprecht, Sigismund's immediate predecessor. The English kings took care to cultivate these links. Richard II and Henry IV had both employed a number of German knights in their households, a tradition which was maintained by Henry V. Some of these men were regularly sent on diplomatic missions to Germany. Hartung von Klux, a German adventurer from Silesia who appears to have come to England with Bolingbroke in 1399 and joined his household when he became king, took part in at least six embassies to Germany between 1411 and 1420. He established an excellent rapport with Sigismund, who gave him an honorary office in his own household and a pension of 500 *gulden* as a token of his respect.[14]

The tacit Anglo-German alliance grew closer once the Council of Constance had opened in November 1414. The English made a visible and important contribution to its proceedings. They sent an impressive delegation led by the Bishop of Salisbury and the Earl of Warwick, which was among the first to arrive. They operated as a disciplined group, tightly controlled by the official element among them. The system of voting by 'nations' and the recognition of England as one of them gave its delegation an influence out of all proportion to the size of its national Church, an advantage which it exploited by entering into a tactical alliance with the German block. The English delegates supported Sigismund on almost every occasion, giving him a degree of influence over the proceedings which he could never have enjoyed with the support of the Germans alone. By comparison the French came with no agreed position and little overall political direction. There were separate delegations for the French Church, the University of Paris and the government, each with its own agenda, and an additional delegation representing the Duke of Burgundy which quarrelled publicly with the others. The deposition of John XXIII, which was very much a personal objective of Sigismund, was driven through mainly by the combined efforts of the English and Germans and against the express

misgivings of the Italians and the hesitations of the French. The English expected a reward for this support. Warwick and his colleagues came with powers to negotiate an alliance with Sigismund against France. The subject was discussed regularly at caucus meetings in the background of the public sessions. Sigismund resisted these blandishments because he had a larger end in view. He planned to offer his services to the warring nations as a mediator.[15]

In about March 1415, after he had learned of the confirmation of the peace of Arras, Sigismund had broached his plan with the Armagnac princes on the French royal council and suggested a personal meeting. The French government, which was at this stage engaged in the desperate diplomatic effort to stave off the imminent English invasion, accepted the proposal with open arms. Early in July, while Archbishop Boisratier and his colleagues were arguing with Henry V at Winchester, messengers arrived in Constance with safe-conducts for the German King and his entourage. Their arrival in the imperial city coincided with that of Hartung von Klux, who had probably come on the same business. A few days later Sigismund left Constance for Perpignan, then part of the kingdom of Aragon. The main purpose of his journey was to meet Benedict XIII and persuade him to abdicate, as the Roman Pope Gregory XII had recently done, thus making way for the election of a universally recognised candidate. But as he was about to leave he summoned the national delegations at Constance before him and announced that he proposed to extend his journey in order to make peace between England and France and, if he could, between the Armagnac and Burgundian factions in France. Sigismund's initiative came too late to avert the invasion. He arrived in Perpignan on 19 September, the day after the defenders of Harfleur agreed to surrender the town to Henry V. On the day of the battle of Agincourt he was still locked in fruitless debate with the obdurate Benedict. In the middle of December, after nearly two months of argument, negotiations with Benedict XIII broke down and Sigismund left for Narbonne. There, in the presence of observers from France and Scotland, the representatives of Aragon, Castile and Navarre were finally persuaded to renounce their allegiance to the obstinate old man. It was Sigismund's finest hour. Shortly before Christmas he left for Paris.[16]

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The prospect of negotiations under Sigismund's auspices added fresh urgency to the French government's military plans. Charles VI's council was determined to dent the charisma of victory which

would inevitably be Henry's main diplomatic advantage. If their own negotiators were to have anything to bargain with it was essential to restore the reputation of French arms and to recapture Harfleur before the English could return to France with another army. As a potential landing place close to the political heart of France Harfleur was of great strategic importance. But it was rapidly acquiring an even greater symbolic significance as the one tangible English gain from the Agincourt campaign, whose recapture might efface the humiliation of the previous year. The main decisions had been taken by the Dauphin's ministers before his death. At the beginning of December the government had doubled the rate of the *gabelle* to finance the recovery of the town. They did not intend to make the same mistake as they had earlier in the year, when they had left the French coast completely exposed from the sea. In addition to substantial land forces they proposed to collect a large fleet of galleys and carracks to blockade Harfleur and fight off any attempt to relieve it from England. The small port of Honfleur on the south side of the Seine estuary was to be refortified to serve as a base for this fleet.[17]

Finding the ships was a major challenge. The two main shipowning regions of France were Flanders and Brittany. Both of them had maritime treaties with England which closed their ports to the government's requisitioning officers. Some ships could be requisitioned in Normandy and Picardy and in La Rochelle. With time others could be built in the royal arsenal at Rouen. But for the bulk of its war fleet France would depend, as she always had done, on vessels chartered in from the major naval powers of southern Europe, Castile and Genoa. Ambassadors were despatched at the end of 1415 to both places. Their experience eloquently reflected the diminished reach of French power and influence since the onset of the civil war. The network of European alliances which had sustained France at the height of her prestige in the 1370s and 1380s no longer existed. French diplomats were now petitioners at the courts where they had once been the self-confident representatives of Europe's most powerful state.

In Castile the King was a minor. The country was ruled by joint regents, the child-King's mother Catherine of Lancaster, who was Henry V's aunt, and his Aragonese uncle Fernando de Antequera. Fernando, who was the dominant member of this partnership, had repudiated the aggressive instincts of the previous King, Henry III. Instead, he had pursued a policy of avoiding commitments outside the peninsula and promoting Castile's increasingly important trade with northern Europe. In the process he had brought Castile closer to England and allowed the naval alliance with France to fall into

abeyance. The old naval treaty had been modified in 1408 and the obligation to supply fixed numbers of troops and warships on demand had been replaced by much looser undertakings. As a result the French ambassadors were unable to obtain the much-prized fleet of war galleys for which they had come. But they were allowed to hire ocean-going carracks in the Biscay ports and succeeded in obtaining about thirty of them.

In Genoa they were more successful but at a heavy cost in pride and prestige. Until recently the Ligurian city had been a satellite of France with a large French garrison commanded by Marshal Boucicaut. But the Genoese had expelled the French in 1409 and were currently regarded as rebels by the government in Paris. A grand embassy including two bishops arrived in the city in the new year with chests of hard-found cash and authority to abandon all of Charles VI's rights over the republic. In return the Genoese were persuaded to agree to a ten-year alliance. They allowed the French emissaries to negotiate an agreement with a syndicate of prominent Genoese businessmen. These men undertook to provide a fleet of eight large sailing carracks and eight oared warships referred to as 'triremes' ('which idiots call galleys,' said the Genoese chronicler), complete with rowing crews, officers and a corps of 600 crossbowmen. They were to sail in the spring under the command of John Grimaldi, the famous naval entrepreneur whose family had fought for France in every generation since the 1330s.[18]

When Bernard of Armagnac became Constable of France he inherited these plans but injected into their execution his own characteristic mix of energy and ruthlessness. The main problem, as always, was finance. The increase in the *gabelle* would come nowhere near to covering the cost of the major operations involved. The wages of Armagnac's standing army in Paris alone came to some 37,000 *livres* a month without counting the crossbowmen. Less sensitive than Louis of Guyenne to public opinion, the Constable proposed to raise the money by another *taille*, perhaps the most unpopular tool of public finance at the government's disposal. In the third week of January 1416 a great council, practically a conclave of the Armagnac faction, approved a levy which probably amounted to 900,000 *livres*. This was half as much again as the *taille* imposed the year before, which had itself proved difficult to collect. In theory it was payable in March. But the government could not wait until March. To fund the immediate costs, much of what remained of the King's treasures and the whole of the late Dauphin's valuable collection of jewellery were pawned for loans. Even that was not enough. The government had to impose a supplementary *aide* (in effect a mini-*taille*), which was really only a thinly disguised excuse

for levying forced loans in Paris and other cities, ostensibly on the security of its proceeds.[19]

Harfleur was vulnerable, as Henry V's ministers were beginning to realise. The damage done to the walls and towers during the siege made it necessary for the English to maintain a very large garrison to defend them as well as a small army of masons, carpenters and craftsmen charged with their reconstruction and repair. The total establishment, at 1,420 men, was even larger than the wartime establishment of Calais and its outlying forts. It was commanded by the King's uncle the Earl of Dorset, and included no fewer than four barons and twenty-two knights on its payroll strength. A military administration was set up, modelled on Calais, with its own treasurer, receiver and victualler, each with his staff of clerks. Conditions in the town were difficult. The place was a shell, abandoned by its indigenous population and inhabited entirely by soldiers and auxiliaries and a handful of courageous English colonists attracted by the offers of free houses and customs exemptions. Its defence ate up money, more than £11,300 on wages alone in the first year. Supply was a major problem. The garrison required a constant flow of victuals, fodder, equipment and building materials. *Patis* exacted from the surrounding villages met only a small proportion of these needs. Fish, grain, fodder for horses, salted meat, brewing malt, ox carcasses by the hundred, wine by the shipload, all had to be purchased in vast quantities in England for shipment across 150 miles of hostile sea to Harfleur, often in the teeth of winter storms. Even so it was not enough. The Earl of Dorset was obliged to mount large armed foraging raids into the Seine valley and the Pays de Caux to replenish his stores. As supplies were exhausted close at hand the raiding parties had to range ever further afield. At the end of November they had come within sight of the suburbs of Rouen, a distance of more than fifty miles. These adventures, which involved a large proportion of the garrison, were extremely dangerous. They denuded the town of troops and exposed the raiders to the risk of being cut off from their base. They also destroyed the productive resources of the region and stored up problems for the future. The policy could not continue indefinitely. In the long term the garrison of Harfleur was only sustainable if a large part of western Normandy was brought under its control.[20]

Dorset returned to England to take part in a great council in the new year, the traditional occasion for reviewing plans for military operations in the coming year. In the absence of any record of the discussions their tenor has to be inferred from subsequent events. The main items on the agenda must have been the defence of

Harfleur and the renewed invasion of France planned for the summer. But the immediate issue was the forthcoming peace mission of Sigismund of Luxembourg. Henry V could not ignore Sigismund's intervention. He had to appear interested in a negotiated settlement if he was to retain the support of Parliament and political opinion in England. Moreover the German King's initiative might succeed. The French government might be pushed into conceding the Brétigny terms. They had come close to it before the Agincourt campaign. It was reasonable to suppose that the campaign's dramatic outcome might push them further. The problem was that it had taken longer than anticipated for Sigismund to deal with Benedict XIII and his Spanish sponsors. The revised timing of Sigismund's mission posed great difficulties for the English King. It forced him to defer, in the event for a whole year, the invasion of France by which he had planned to exploit the victory at Agincourt and the current divisions among his enemies. The council does not seem to have anticipated an immediate threat to Harfleur, a view which presumably reflected the judgment of the Earl of Dorset. Three King's ships, including the 540-ton *Trinity Royal,* were commissioned to return with Dorset to Harfleur to reinforce its seaward defences, and additional artillery was sent out from the armoury in the Tower of London. But otherwise the town received no reinforcements from England.[21]

This was a serious misjudgment. In fact the French Constable turned his energies to operations against Harfleur as soon as he had disposed of the threat from the Duke of Burgundy. At the beginning of March 1416 he left Paris for Rouen at the head of most of his Gascon bands, some 1,800 men in all. Louis de Longny, who was serving as an acting Marshal, was already busy raising more troops locally in the Pays de Caux. Unaware of all this activity, the Earl of Dorset set out shortly after his return from England on a long-range foraging raid towards the port of Dieppe, more than fifty miles north. He took with him a large proportion of his garrison, probably about 1,000 mounted men. On 11 March the Count of Armagnac sent Louis de Longny to cut the English line of retreat to Harfleur while he himself confronted Dorset's force on the coast road north of Fécamp. Dorset's men were caught unawares before they had been able to draw themselves up in battle array. Cornered between the French army and the sea they suffered heavy casualties. The survivors were lucky to escape in the failing light into some nearby woods. The Constable sent a parlementaire to offer them terms: the surrender of Harfleur and their lives, in return for ransom agreements and safe-conducts back to England. The English rejected them out of hand. But it meant that they had to fight their way back

to their base. On the 13th they came close to disaster when the Marshal and the Constable joined forces to attack them as they picked their way along the beach near Chef de Caux. By the time the raiding force returned to Harfleur they had lost about 100 men-at-arms and 300 archers, about a third of the garrison's payroll strength, together with their horses and baggage. The Count of Armagnac was furious not to have destroyed them entirely. He gave Louis de Longny the rough edge of his tongue for attacking prematurely in the final battle and ordered fifty of his own men to be hanged from trees for fleeing at the height of the engagement. A few days after this he established his headquarters at Montivilliers, three miles north of Harfleur, and began methodically sealing off the town on the landward side.[22]

The Earl of Dorset's narrow scrape with disaster caused panic in England when it became known there. On about 18 March 1416, within days of the encounter at Chef de Caux, the English government gave orders to prepare a relief expedition. The Admirals' officers began a large programme of ship requisitioning and indentures were sealed for some 900 men-at-arms and 1,800 archers to fight from the decks and topcastles. The command was given to the 21-year-old Sir John Holland, who had fought valiantly at Agincourt and had been elected a Knight of the Garter on the battlefield. But the expedition could not be ready before the beginning of May and in the interval the situation of the town sharply deteriorated. The Count of Armagnac's army around Harfleur had been considerably reinforced. Shortly after this the first reports of the French government's agreement with the Genoese reached England, followed by the news of large-scale requisitioning of ships in the French Channel ports. It was clear that the relief of Harfleur was likely to involve a major battle at sea and that the force originally proposed would not be nearly equal to the task. The fleet, which already comprised most of the English merchant marine, was therefore roughly doubled by hiring ships in Holland and Zeeland. The army which was to accompany it was trebled in size, to at least 7,300 men. And instead of Sir John Holland, the King decided to command the enlarged relief expedition himself. These changes to what had originally been envisaged as an armed revictualling operation had baleful consequences, for they made it necessary to put back the departure of the relief force to the end of June.[23]

The delay was very nearly fatal to the garrison, whose stores were running down fast. The Earl of Dorset wrote several letters to the King and the council pressing them to send victuals, artillery and other items. 'But nothing has been sent,' he complained, 'which

is disappointing to me and to all the loyal subjects of the King … whose hardships are mounting daily and who cannot be expected to continue without food.' The problem was not inertia, as Dorset supposed. In fact much of the material that he had asked for had been procured and was piling up in the warehouses of the south- and east-coast ports. Ships were lying at anchor at Sandwich, Gravesend and Southampton ready to carry it to the beleaguered town. But until a fleet could be assembled strong enough to force the French blockade they were condemned to remain there. Meanwhile Dorset warned the King that his men would not be able to hold out beyond the beginning of June. To press the point he had this message carried to England by the two most senior officers of the town administration and an experienced knight of the garrison. 'They will speak more plainly than I can.'[24]

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Sigismund of Luxembourg entered Paris on 1 March 1416 with a clattering escort of 800 outriders. It was the last great state occasion that the city would witness for several decades. The French court did everything it could to impress the visitor and flatter his vanity. He was met on the road at Étampes thirty miles from the city by the officers and leading citizens, at Longjumeau by the councillors and advocates of the *grands corps* and at Bourg-la-Reine by the Duke of Berry, the Chancellor and the entire royal council. The smiles and embraces and the carefully choreographed displays of official affection have not changed much in six centuries. Sigismund entered the French capital by the Porte Saint-Jacques and was escorted up the Rue Saint-Jacques to the Île de la Cité. The King, drifting in and out of coherence, had been dressed up to receive him and placed on a throne at the top of the monumental stone staircase of the Palace courtyard on the island. Sigismund was then installed in state in the Louvre. Much of the five weeks that he spent in the city was devoted to touring its sights, admiring the ladies of the court and participating in a long round of balls and banquets. The French were not impressed by Sigismund, whom they found rather gross. When he was shown round the courts he sat in the King's place in the chamber of the Parlement and intervened in cases being heard. He served highly spiced meat and strong wines to ladies at his table which none of them could eat or drink. He was ostentatiously mean, making gifts of cheap jewellery and giving no offerings when he was received at Notre-Dame.[25]

By comparison very little is known about the business for which Sigismund had come. This is probably because very little happened. The supercilious view which the French took of their guest may

have been a contributory factor. But the more fundamental problem was the void of authority at the heart of the French state. There was no one with both the will and the power to reach agreement on the issues with England. Charles VI was displayed in public from time to time when the state of his health allowed but was incapable of participating. His place was taken by the Duke of Berry, a dignified figure but now almost entirely without influence. The Count of Armagnac was on bad terms with the German King. Alone among the great men of France he had declined to renounce his allegiance to the anti-Pope Benedict XIII. And he had no interest in any deal with England which might prevent him from recapturing Harfleur. He showed his contempt for the whole proceedings by departing for Normandy as soon as Sigismund had arrived. The German King had several meetings with the rest of the royal council, but they appear to have produced nothing except wordy expressions of goodwill. It was obvious to Sigismund, as it was to most other observers, that nothing could be achieved without restoring the authority of the government, and that would require an accommodation with the Duke of Burgundy. But the Constable was equally opposed to that. Irritated and frustrated, in the middle of March Sigismund abruptly announced his intention of going to England.[26]

The decision must have come as a surprise to the French King's council. Sigismund had not previously intimated any intention of visiting England. There are good reasons for believing that it was part of an audacious plan to circumvent the Armagnac ultras on the royal council, which originated in the inner circle of the royal family.

The Count of Armagnac was not popular with the King's immediate entourage. The Queen resented his bullying regime and had become concerned about her children's inheritance in the aftermath of the disaster at Agincourt. After several years in which she had more or less withdrawn from politics she had begun to take a more active political role again. Prematurely aged at forty-six and so infirm that she had to be moved about in a wheelchair, she had been a visible presence at the festivities attending Sigismund's visit. Isabelle saw her son John as the instrument for putting an end to the civil war, a natural successor in the conciliatory role of Louis of Guyenne. She thought it intolerable that disputes between her husband's Armagnac councillors and the Duke of Burgundy were preventing him from coming to Paris and taking up his rightful position at the heart of government.

She found an ally in the young man's father-in-law, her Wittelsbach cousin William of Bavaria. William had been in Paris with the new Dauphin's chancellor and other officers of his

household throughout Sigismund's visit. When Sigismund decided to visit England William of Bavaria proposed go with him as joint mediator. The chronicler of Saint-Denis says, on the authority of 'well-informed people', that this was Sigismund's idea. No doubt Sigismund adopted it, but in fact it appears to have been authorised and quite possibly conceived by Isabelle. In London it would be possible to involve the Dukes of Bourbon and Orléans in the negotiations. The dukes were prisoners of Henry V. But they were royal princes, outranking every one of Charles VI's councillors except for the Duke of Berry. They remained considerable political figures even from a distance. They were likely to be more flexible interlocutors than the Count of Armagnac and more amenable to an arrangement with the English King. He had made it clear that he would not allow them to ransom themselves except as part of an overall peace treaty with France, and they had been pressing vocally for fresh negotiations ever since their capture. They also had strong dynastic reasons for wanting to install the new Dauphin as regent in place of the regime of Bernard of Armagnac. It promised to revive the waning prestige of the monarchy and appease the animosities which had reduced it to impotence. William of Bavaria regarded his role in England as being to represent the Dauphin's interests. Several members of the young prince's household staff were expected to accompany him there and the considerable costs were all ultimately paid out of the revenues of his appanage. William and Isabelle may even have envisaged that a deal done in London might be authorised by the Dauphin and the royal dukes over the heads of the King's council in Paris.[27]

On 7 April Sigismund rode out of the French capital for Calais on the next stage of his mission. He was accompanied on his journey by a small delegation representing the French government led by Regnault de Chartres Archbishop of Reims, an experienced diplomat who had been a prominent member of the French delegation at Constance. William of Bavaria returned to his domains to assemble the retinue and the cash which he would need to cut a suitably imposing figure at the English court.[28]

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On 19 April 1416, Easter day, the princes were dining together at the Louvre when they were interrupted by a retainer of the Duke of Berry who had seen men arming themselves through the windows of a rich citizen of known Burgundian sympathies. The alarm went up. The Armagnac leaders in the city fled for safety to the Louvre while Tanneguy du Châtel took a troop of soldiers and arrested the ringleaders. What came to light when they were questioned was a

well-organised plot against the Armagnac government led by people at the heart of the administration. One of them was Nicholas d'Orgemont, canon of Notre-Dame, president of one of the chambers of the Chambre des Comptes and the son of a former Chancellor of France. According to the report given out by the council the plotters had planned to take over one of the northern gates of the city and admit the troops of John the Fearless. The mob would then rise to take possession of the streets shouting 'Bourgogne!' and waving the Duke of Burgundy's banner. The Dukes of Berry and Anjou were to be put to death together with Tanneguy du Châtel, the *échevins* of Paris and the principal officers of state. The plotters had apparently made contact with the Duke of Burgundy. He had sent three of his officers to Paris with messages of support. He promised to have his troops waiting nearby when the moment came.

As the news of the discovery spread, many of those involved fled, fearing that they had been compromised. They included prominent citizens and senior members of the University. Papers found in their houses implicated some 500 more supporters, many of whom were arrested over the following days. The government panicked. Paris was uncharacteristically empty of soldiers, for most of the garrison was with the Constable outside Harfleur. The immediate result of the panic was to provide unexpected relief to the hard-pressed English garrison of the town. The Count of Armagnac sent Ramonet de la Guerre back to Paris at once with 800 men-at-arms. Then he opened negotiations with the Earl of Dorset for a short truce. Dorset's stores were close to exhaustion. He was glad enough to agree a four-week truce, from 5 May to 2 June, which allowed the Constable to return to Paris with another 300 men.[29]

In Paris, Bernard of Armagnac inaugurated a savage campaign of repression. A succession of condemned men were dragged on hurdles to be executed at Les Halles before hundreds of their fellow citizens. Many more who were not worth the spectacle were obscurely drowned in the basements of the Châtelet. As a cleric Nicholas d'Orgemont could not be sentenced to death. But he was made to watch the first executions at Les Halles and then condemned by the Church authorities to life imprisonment on bread and water. He died shortly afterwards in the foul cells of the Bishop of Orléans' prison at Mehun-sur-Loire. Yet in spite of these hideous examples others were still plotting the return of the Duke of Burgundy to Paris. Over the following weeks John the Fearless made several attempts to smuggle weapons and armed partisans into the city. Relations between the government and the Parisians plumbed fresh lows. The city gates, apart from the four axial openings, were walled up again. The street chains were once more

impounded. Weapons held in private houses were ordered to be handed in on pain of death. Large numbers of Parisians were proscribed. Some were imprisoned. Others were exiled from the city. Their names were shouted out by heralds at street corners to the sound of the trumpet. The University suffered another purge, seriously depleting the ranks of its masters and professors. The butchers were believed to have been the main force behind the planned rising and were regarded as the epicentre of future earthquakes. They were the target of the government's special venom. Their corporation was deprived of its privileges and monopolies and the authority of its masters abolished. The Grande Boucherie was suppressed and its buildings demolished, while its functions were distributed between four smaller butcheries spread across Paris. These measures were wholly counterproductive as such measures commonly are. For two years to come Paris would be cowed and fearful, effervescent with resentment and anger, a continual threat behind Armagnac ministers' backs which inhibited everything they did to defend France against the English.[30]

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At Westminster, Parliament had opened for the second time in less than five months on 16 March 1416. The purpose of the assembly was at least as much diplomatic as financial. Henry V wanted to take advantage of the continuing afterglow of Agincourt. The city of Bordeaux's agent in London reported that he could do no wrong in English eyes. His wisdom and judgment were lauded daily. 'Truly,' men said, 'we have never seen his like in England.' It was a moment at which to impress on the French government and the German King the strength of the King's determination, the unity of his kingdom and the extent of his resources, as well as the manifest will of God. Chancellor Beaufort's opening address admirably reflected this policy. It restated the official myth in perhaps its most extreme form. The battle of Agincourt, said Beaufort, had been 'a heavenly judgment carried out by the sword'. Had not God made his decision plain, first by the destruction of the French fleet at Sluys in 1340, then by the defeat of John II at Poitiers in 1356 'and now, thirdly, by our most serene King on the field of Agincourt?' The Lord had stretched forth his arm to punish the obduracy of the French by depriving them of their three main weapons against England: their leading ports, Calais and Harfleur; their courage, which had continually failed them in battle; and their military strength which had been lost in the carnage of Agincourt. 'Oh God, why does this wretched and stiff-necked nation not obey these divine sentences so many and so terrible?'[31] Yet in spite of this triumphalist thunder

Beaufort's audience was meeting under the shadow of the Earl of Dorset's defeat in the Pays de Caux. The noisy preparations for the relief of Harfleur were all around them. Bishop Beaufort reminded the Commons that the war was not over. Great beginnings could only be brought to completion if they provided the 'wherewithal'. They agreed to bring forward the second of the two subsidies granted in the Agincourt Parliament from November to early June. Had the King expected more? Perhaps. But the concession made two full subsidies available within a six-month period to finance large-scale military operations during the summer and saved the King from serious embarrassment.[32]

Sigismund of Luxembourg landed at Dover on 1 May 1416. He was even more extravagantly received in England than he had been in France. He was met at Calais by the Earl of Warwick with the whole garrison drawn up in their finest array. He was welcomed at every stage on the route to London by the King's brothers surrounded by magnates and veterans of Agincourt in a carefully planned ceremonial crescendo. The Mayor, aldermen and the liverymen of London assembled on Blackheath with a crowd of citizens to greet his cavalcade. The King himself, accompanied by 5,000 noblemen and gentlemen summoned from every county of England, rode out to receive him a mile from the city gates by the stream known as St Thomas's Watering, where today the Albany Road crosses the Old Kent Road. There was a *Te Deum* in the visitor's honour at St Paul's. The entire palace of Westminster was made over to his party while Henry lodged across the river in the Archbishop of Canterbury's palace at Lambeth. Sigismund was admitted to the Order of the Garter, whose annual St George's Day ceremony was delayed for his benefit. Parliament was reconvened to allow him to address it, which he did at some length. His expenses were paid. Gifts were showered upon him at every turn. Sigismund was gratified. 'This land might be called a land of great nobley and worthiness and plenteous of good and rich people and blessed of governance, with abundance of all worthy commodities that [be]long for a land,' he is said to have told his hosts.[33]

In fact after these impressive preliminaries nothing at all happened for more than three weeks, owing to the absence of William of Bavaria. William's flotilla was delayed by storms in the North Sea and did not arrive in the Thames until 28 May. The work of the conference had to be crammed into the next two weeks. The participants, apart from Sigismund and William themselves, were Regnault de Chartres and his staff, Henry V with a group of his councillors and the Dukes of Orléans and Bourbon. The French royal dukes were supported by other prominent prisoners of war, the

Counts of Richemont, Eu and Vendôme, and the former captain of Harfleur Raoul de Gaucourt the Younger. Sigismund deftly exploited the presence of the French prisoners, treating them with conspicuous respect as if they were the true representatives of France. He presided at a great banquet in the Palace of Westminster with the prisoners seated in the place of honour on his right. In the background Henry V applied his own, cruder pressures. His councillors were negotiating simultaneously with the ambassadors of the Duke of Burgundy. A Burgundian embassy led by Jacques de Lichtervelde, one of the Duke's most influential councillors, was in London throughout the month of June. On 17 June the Earl of Warwick left for Ghent where John the Fearless sumptuously entertained him with much publicity and noise. These things can hardly have passed unnoticed.[34]

There were two broad questions before the peace conference. The larger one was about the terms on which a final peace could be agreed between England and France. But the more immediate question concerned the fate of Harfleur while the negotiations continued. Henry laid out his terms for peace at the outset. He wanted the treaty of Brétigny to be reinstated in its entirety and he wanted Harfleur to be ceded to him in perpetuity with a sufficient pale of territory to sustain it. These demands can hardly have come as a surprise. Apart from Harfleur, which Henry claimed by right of conquest, they were the same demands as he had made before the Agincourt campaign. After much discussion Regnault and the prisoners refused to accept them and the English King refused to moderate them. Evidently no progress could be made without a fresh decision by the council in Paris. This would involve delay and raised in acute form the position of Harfleur.

The Count of Armagnac had every intention of pressing on with the siege of Harfleur in spite of the negotiations. The Genoese fleet had by now arrived in the Seine from the Mediterranean. They had been joined there by the largest French fleet to have been assembled for nearly three decades. Henry V was dismayed. He suspected the French of deliberately spinning out the conference until the town had fallen. Sigismund and William of Bavaria made various proposals for dealing with this problem. The most promising was a three-year truce to allow time for a proper peace conference at which all the options could be considered with the benefit of proper instructions. The mediators proposed that the siege should be lifted and the town provisionally surrendered into their own custody, to be dealt with in due course in accordance with the terms of the final treaty once it had been agreed. In the meantime the French princes in captivity would be released on parole against suitable security.

The English King was now so concerned about the ability of the Earl of Dorset's garrison to hold out that he was prepared to agree to this package even though it would prevent him from following up his victory at Agincourt for another three years. At one point it seemed that the French in London might also agree. But in the end neither Regnault de Chartres nor the prisoners were prepared to put their seals to something of this importance without consulting the council in Paris. The refusal of the French royal dukes in England to perform their allotted roles sunk the careful scheme devised by Isabelle and William of Bavaria. Henry, furious, threatened to walk out. On 13 June he issued a public declaration that the French prisoners in England and the royal councillors in Paris were 'scheming with all their might to deceive and defraud the King of the Romans, the [Count] of Holland and the King'. He declared his intention of going ahead with the relief expedition with all possible speed. Orders were given to the troops to proceed to Southampton for embarkation. It was announced that the fleet would sail for Harfleur in early July.

Faced with the prospect of the collapse of the conference and their own indefinite incarceration in England the French prisoners, who had hitherto made common cause with Regnault de Chartres, now made a new proposal of their own. It was a modified version of the old one. They suggested that the mediators' plan for the provisional custody of Harfleur should be put urgently to Charles VI's council in Paris, together with an accelerated timetable for resuming negotiations for a permanent peace. They proposed a summit meeting on the marches of Picardy, to be attended by Sigismund and William of Bavaria, by Henry V and the 'great of his realm' and by Charles VI together with such princes of his blood as he might choose. If either sovereign was indisposed (the reference was obviously to Charles VI), others would be nominated with plenary powers to represent him. The six prisoners participating in the conference in London would be brought to Calais during the summit ready to be released as soon as suitable terms were agreed. Raoul de Gaucourt the Younger was paroled to go at once to France as the emissary of the French princes in London, accompanied by Regnault de Chartres and Sigismund's personal representative, to obtain the consent of the French government. A strict timetable was imposed. They promised to report the French response within twenty days of their departure. If the proposal was accepted in Paris a date and venue for the summit meeting would be agreed within ten days thereafter, together with a truce to protect the participants. The meeting would take place within five weeks after that. A separate document (which has not survived) recorded the proposed

terms of the truce and the arrangements to be made for the provisional custody of Harfleur.

Raoul de Gaucourt and Regnault de Chartres left for France shortly after 20 June 1416. They were followed within a few days by Sigismund's personal representative, Nicholas of Gara, Count Palatine of Hungary, with the documents describing the proposals and a personal letter from the German King recommending them to Charles VI. Shortly after them came the Chancery clerk Philip Morgan, one of the few men whom Henry trusted with his closest secrets. Morgan was accompanied by two other officials. They brought with them the King's sealed authority to conclude the truce. It seems to have been taken for granted that the prisoners' proposals would be accepted. Meanwhile the conference dispersed to await events, the prisoners to their secure quarters, Sigismund to the agreeable surroundings of Leeds castle in Kent, and Henry to supervise the muster of his army at Southampton. William of Bavaria returned home. To maintain contact with him the King arranged for his friend and councillor John Catterick Bishop of Coventry, who was returning to the Council of Constance, to accompany him as far as Le Quesnoy and remain at the court of Hainaut over the following critical weeks.[35]

Nicholas of Gara reached Paris at the beginning of July 1416. He and his companions were received with much splendour and show and were shortly admitted to the council to describe their master's proposals. It was a large and agitated meeting, the numbers swollen by the attendance of the leading members of the Chambre des Comptes and the Parlement. The King was a passive presence on the throne. The most notable absence was the Duke of Berry, who had died three weeks earlier at the Hôtel de Nesle at the great age of seventy-six, an incongruous survivor of the golden years of Charles V and one of the last firm advocates of peace with England in the Armagnac camp. When Nicholas of Gara had spoken, each councillor in turn was invited to express his opinion. Louis of Anjou, the most senior member of the royal family present, spoke first. He was in favour of the proposals. So were most of those who followed him. But the Constable, whose turn came late in the meeting, denounced them with passion. In his view Sigismund and William of Bavaria were not impartial mediators but were playing the King of England's game for him. Their real object was to save Harfleur, which was reaching the end of its resistance. The three-year truce was just a device to give the English time to make it impregnable, like Calais. The suggested summit meeting was a snare, just as the summit with Richard II had been in 1396, when innumerable promises had been made that the English had had no intention of

observing. At the end of this oration the Constable had persuaded most of the lay councillors present.

However 'certain cunning and experienced persons' (they are not named) proposed a middle course. Philip Morgan was known to be on his way to Paris with authority to agree the terms on Henry V's behalf. Rather than rejecting them outright these men suggested that it would be better for the council to meet Morgan but drag out the discussion of the truce for as long as was necessary to enable the Constable to retake Harfleur. This was what the councillors decided to do. The man appointed to perform this role was Regnault de Chartres, supported by two fellow councillors and the King's diplomatic secretary Gontier Col. This decision committed the French government to costly military operations over the following weeks. The next stage of the meeting was therefore devoted to a review of the dismal state of the King's finances. The *taille* of January had proved extremely difficult to collect except in Normandy and other regions directly affected by the threat from England. The flow of money was trickling to a halt. They resolved to impose yet another *taille* of 600,000 francs to meet the costs of pressing the siege of Harfleur to a successful conclusion, the only time that the government had ever tried to levy two *tailles* in one year. On 7 July a letter was drawn up and sealed in the name of Charles VI formally accepting the mediators' proposals and informing Sigismund that the King's representatives would meet the English ambassadors in the cathedral city of Beauvais on the 17th to make the detailed arrangements.[36]

In the meantime the Constable pursued the siege of Harfleur with redoubled fury. Press gangs were sent out to find more seamen. Masons, carpenters and blacksmiths were recruited across Normandy to build siege works and assault equipment. Great quantities of victuals were directed to the army outside the town. Inside Harfleur conditions were terrible. Only one ship had succeeded in running the blockade with supplies since the start of the siege and then only by sailing through the French lines under the white banner of France, a trick that was unlikely to succeed twice. A cow cost ten marks, in normal conditions the price of an adequate warhorse, and warhorses too were being eaten. Years later in old age Sir John Fastolf, who had been one of Dorset's lieutenants during the siege, thought that 500 men had died of starvation. This was an old man's exaggeration, but it is clear that many people did die. Only Dorset's determination and high rank enabled discipline to be maintained in conditions which would have led any other garrison to mutiny and sell out to the enemy.[37]

The English soon realised that the French government's apparent

acceptance of the mediators' plan was a sham. The Count of Armagnac did not behave as if he was anticipating a truce. The reports arriving from Beauvais were disconcerting. When the English agents arrived there on 17 July no arrangements had been made to receive them. They were obliged to book into common lodging houses in the town at their own expense and found guards posted at their doors to prevent them from wandering through the streets. The French ambassadors received them graciously enough but professed to be unaware that a truce was proposed. Sigismund's representatives, they said, had failed to give them the document in which the details of the proposed truce were set out. They would have to consult their ally Castile before a truce as long as three years could be agreed. They then quibbled about the terms. Perhaps, they suggested, one year would be better than three. On 29 July after nearly two weeks of this charade the proceedings were adjourned for further instructions. Well before this stage was reached the English delegation had reported to Henry V that he was being duped.[38]

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By the last week of July 1416 the English relief force was ready. But at the last moment Henry was detained in England by diplomatic preoccupations and was unable to command it himself. So on 22 July he nominated his brother John Duke of Bedford to take command in his place. Bedford boarded his flagship within a few days. But it took another fortnight to collect the ships scattered among the harbours of the Thames and the Solent in the face of stiff south-westerly winds. It was not until early on 14 August that the whole armada assembled off Beachy Head. According to the usually reliable Italian news network there were about 300 vessels. Most of these were requisitioned English merchantmen and royal ships. The rest had been hired in the Low Countries. The larger ships had been built up for fighting with timber castles fore and aft and crow's nests high above the decks. Rows of pavises had been fixed in place along their gunwales to protect the archers from the missiles of the enemy. There were about 6,500 soldiers on board in addition to seamen. That evening the fleet arrived off Harfleur.[39]

Spread out before them across the estuary of the Seine lay the blockading fleet: seven large sailing carracks of Genoa (one carrack had grounded and broken up during the siege); about thirty hired Castilian carracks; a small number of clinker-built barges produced in what would turn out to be a final spasm of effort by the arsenal at Rouen; and about a hundred requisitioned French merchantmen, built up like their English equivalents with timber superstructures.

Morale on board these ships was poor. For want of funds most of them had received only half the pay due to them. As a result there had been large-scale desertions during the summer and many of the ships were seriously under-manned. To make matters worse the Genoese galleys had lost their commander John Grimaldi, who had been killed some weeks before in an encounter with an English convoy homeward-bound from Bordeaux. As a result their crews were unwilling to fight and the galleys were lying beached outside the harbour of Honfleur. Overall command was shared between Guillaume de Lara Viscount of Narbonne, a southerner who had been drawn into the Armagnac web of alliances by his marriage to the Constable's niece, and Guillaume de Montenay, who was captain of Caen and the 'army of the sea'. When in the late afternoon the English fleet was first sighted they summoned the shipmasters together to decide what to do. The dominant voices at the meeting were the Genoese captains. They recommended that the fleet should take the offensive. The alternative would have been to wait for the English to try to force their way through to the town, which would have left the mass of their own ships trapped between an attacking fleet and the shore and unable to manoeuvre, the problem which had led to the disaster at Sluys in 1340. Their advice was accepted and the ships were assigned to their stations. The French and Castilian ships were gathered in a dense mass some way offshore in front of Harfleur. The Genoese carracks were stationed in front of them to seaward together with a large hired German vessel.

As darkness fell the English fleet entered the estuary and dropped anchor some way from the town. The Duke of Bedford's ships with two or three exceptions were dwarfed by the great carracks of Genoa and Castile. But they had an enormous numerical superiority in both hulls and trained soldiers. The Castilians counted the odds and wrote off their chances. They sailed away together at dusk and were not seen again. The rest of the French fleet waited at their stations until morning. Both sides passed an uncomfortable night. The wind rose. High seas battered the anchored hulls. At dawn the signal was given by trumpet and the Genoese carracks advanced towards the English anchorage followed by the rest of the fleet. They spread out as they advanced to envelop the English fleet from the flanks. The two floating masses collided. There was a close battle lasting five or six hours. The English aimed for the Genoese. They fastened themselves to each carrack with grappling irons and tried to board them from ladders. It was a murderous operation. The Genoese crews fought off the assailants from above with lances, crossbow bolts and stones. In the end three of their carracks and the German ship were captured after their defenders had run out of

ammunition. A large French cog and four small oared barges were also boarded and taken. Two more carracks were wrecked on the treacherous sandbanks of the estuary. Once the largest ships had fallen or fled the rest of the French fleet escaped to Honfleur and sheltered behind the sandbanks of the estuary. The casualties were exceptionally high on both sides, especially among the lightly armoured English bowmen and the Genoese. The English claimed to have killed 1,500 French or Genoese and captured 400. Their own losses were higher: 700 men-at-arms and 2,000 archers killed or badly wounded according to a reliable contemporary estimate. About twenty of their ships were sunk. But they relieved Harfleur. As the French ships fled the path to the mouth of the Lézarde opened up. The English ships sailed up the channel and passed between the great twin towers into the enclosed harbour beyond. Within days the siege was abandoned. The Constable's army retreated and the locally recruited troops were withdrawn to garrisons. It was a pyrrhic victory, but a decisive one.[40]

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The Duke of Burgundy had been a distant spectator of the conferences in London, but he had the strongest possible interest in the outcome. Peace between England and France would have been a disaster. It would have enabled the Count of Armagnac's government to turn the whole strength of France against him. The Duke's worst nightmare was that the English might even support them in this endeavour as part of a peace treaty. John's fears were not fanciful. It was what Henry IV had done in 1412 and Sigismund had suggested in 1414. All of the Duke of Burgundy's diplomatic energies were devoted to ensuring that this idea did not resurface in 1416. After several months of low-level diplomacy in London and Calais agreement was reached at the end of April to extend the Anglo-Flemish commercial truce for another year. The truce recognised the neutrality of Flanders in the Anglo-French war, a principle which had been reluctantly accepted by the French government for several years. But it did not make the Duke of Burgundy neutral so far as his other domains were concerned. This was the step that John the Fearless now proposed to take. It was the main purpose of Jacques de Lichtervelde's mission to England in June 1416. On 24 June, shortly after Sigismund's conference in London broke up, Lichtervelde and his colleagues concluded a fresh agreement with the English King. Henry promised that in the event of war between England and France his armies would not enter the Duke of Burgundy's domains. In return John would not allow any of his subjects to fight against them. These undertakings were to

remain in force until the end of September 1417. In addition Henry V undertook that until then he would not make any peace with France which was contrary to the Duke's interests, and although no corresponding promise by John the Fearless has survived it is likely that there was one. These arrangements fell well short of a formal military alliance, but they marked a significant step towards it. They served to reassure the Duke of Burgundy that Henry would not join an Armagnac-led coalition against him, and they ensured that the Duke would not assist the defence of France against the invader. The agreement was presumably intended to remain secret. But it could hardly be concealed, for both parties had to instruct their officials to enforce it. John's instructions were very explicit. They forbade his subjects to fight in French armies in the event of an English invasion. It was not long before they came to the notice of the royal *baillis*. Copies were obtained and sent to Paris where they provoked much outrage and talk of treason.[41]

Henry now resolved to build on the new agreement. In early July 1416 he persuaded Sigismund to join with him in inviting the Duke of Burgundy to a summit meeting at Calais. The Duke of Berg, one of the principal members of Sigismund's entourage, carried this invitation to Lille. There he made common cause with Henry's ambassador, the Earl of Warwick, who had been living at the Burgundian court for the past month. John the Fearless welcomed them with open arms. Two weeks of feasting, jousting and ostentatious fellowship followed which cost him more than 5,000 *livres*. The echoes must have been heard by the French King's councillors in Paris and his ambassadors at Beauvais, as no doubt they were intended to be. By 23 July it was known in London that John the Fearless had accepted the invitation to Calais and preparations were put in hand to receive him there with suitable ceremony. The open space in front of the castle gate was filled with pavilions draped with gold cloth. The bleak stone chambers above were lined with silk, arras and damasks and the stores filled with food, wine and spices. More than £10,000 was laid out. Meanwhile John the Fearless set about demonstrating how much his friendship could be worth. At the end of July his retainers embarked on major military operations in northern France, which Charles VI's council in Paris regarded as a deliberate attempt to help the English by drawing French troops away from Harfleur at the critical point of the siege. Heavy mounted raids were launched towards the borders of the Pays de Caux. Several hundred men from Artois and Picardy, commanded by one of the Duke's principal captains, Hector de Saveuses, and accompanied by Elyon de Jacqueville and other banished Cabochians, launched a daring raid towards Paris at the

end of July which arrived without warning outside the Porte Saint-Denis on the evening of 12 August. The gates were only just shut against them in time.[42]

The German King, whose Anglophile sympathies were becoming increasingly obvious, now finally abandoned any semblance of neutrality. On 12 August 1416 he met the English King at Canterbury and after three days of discussion declared himself an ally of England. Their treaty, which was sealed on 15 August, was an extraordinary document. Sigismund recited the history of his mission from the time he had left Constance. The French government, he complained, had persistently encroached upon the territory of the German Empire and on the provinces of France which rightfully belonged to the kings of England ('as our brother Henry, King of England and France and Lord of Ireland, has often given us to understand'). It had covertly obstructed his attempts at Perpignan to persuade Benedict XIII to abdicate. It had met all his attempts at mediation with mockery and deceit. Henceforth he and Henry would be friends and allies. Each of them would assist the other, if necessary by force, to recover their respective rights from France. Judging by the prolix letter of explanation which Sigismund addressed to Charles VI, his motives were a curious mixture of the grandiose and the trivial. Pique was unquestionably a large part of it. His pride had been wounded by his treatment in France. He was outraged by the deceitful way in which his proposals for a peace summit had been first accepted and then talked out by the French ambassadors at Beauvais. Impressed by Henry's victory at Agincourt and his obvious authority in England, and flattered by the extravagant attention paid to him there, Sigismund was readily persuaded that only obduracy and dishonesty prevented the French government from acknowledging the justice of the English King's territorial claims.

Sigismund saw in the internal disintegration of France and the military strength of England the chance to reverse the gradual process by which the French Crown had absorbed the francophone provinces on the western marches of the Empire or reduced them to the status of satellites: the half-forgotten Kingdom of Arles, the old Imperial dominions of Burgundy east of the Saône, Lorraine and Metz. Fantastic as these ideas may now seem they were by no means absurd in the eyes of those who felt that they were witnessing the death-throes of the French monarchy. To these considerations was added Sigismund's concern for the work of the Council of Constance and a future crusade. It was not just that the unity of Latin Christendom was the indispensable precondition for both. There were persistent reports in the late summer of 1416 that

Bernard of Armagnac, now Benedict XIII's sole notable supporter in France, was trying to bring the country back to his obedience and recreate the Avignon papacy. In fact, although the Count persisted in his personal loyalty to Benedict for the rest of his life, these reports were almost certainly untrue. But Sigismund seems to have believed them and feared that all his efforts to heal the papal schism might be undone. The French King's ministers naturally saw the treaty of Canterbury in more black-and-white terms. They were angry and dismayed. Jean de Montreuil probably spoke for most of them when, in a savage pamphlet written from his retreat in the abbey of Chaalis, he accused Sigismund of having been a covert ally of Henry V all along and denounced his pretensions to act as a neutral mediator as a sham.[43]

Strangely enough, in spite of his declared partiality, Sigismund himself did not regard his role as mediator as at an end. Nor it seems did Henry. At the conclusion of the conferences at Beauvais the English and French ambassadors had resolved to meet again at a time and place to be agreed. Henry and Sigismund hoped that the forthcoming conference at Calais would frighten the French King's council into submission by raising the spectre of a military alliance uniting England, Burgundy and Germany against France. So, in the second week of August, the meeting between the English and French ambassadors was refixed for 4 September at Calais. Henry's agent at the court of Hainaut, John Catterick, travelled to Lille and persuaded the Duke of Burgundy to time his arrival in Calais to coincide with the appearance of the French delegation in order to maximise the pressure on them. Writing to the German nation at the Council of Constance on the eve of his departure for Calais, Sigismund told them that he hoped that the presence of all the main actors there would bring peace.[44]

Neither Henry nor Sigismund had taken the full measure of the French government's determination. The German King arrived in Calais with his entourage on 25 August 1416. Henry V followed ten days later on 4 September, escorted by a flotilla of sixty ships and accompanied by Chancellor Beaufort, Archbishop Chichele, Bishop Langley of Durham and an impressive retinue of soldiers, courtiers and clerks. The Archbishop of Reims, Regnault de Chartres, reached Calais a few days late on 9 September, accompanied by his fellow ambassadors and the indispensable Gontier Col. The negotiations with them did not go well. The English King resolved to visit upon them all of the indignities which had been heaped on his own ambassadors at Beauvais. They were confined to their lodgings and made to pay their own expenses and their servants were forbidden to wander through the streets without an escort. The atmosphere

must have been glacial when they eventually confronted the English councillors appointed to deal with them: Archbishop Chichele and the Earl of Dorset, supported by the three English diplomats whom Regnault had last met at Beauvais. Although the French emissaries were in Calais for more than three weeks, the only record of the discussions with them is an obscure memorandum which they presented to Sigismund when their mission was on the verge of failure. This suggests that they regarded the dowry of Catherine of France as the only negotiable issue. They insisted that any deal would have to include the return of Harfleur and they appear to have had no new proposals to make about the cession of territory in the south-west or the feudal status of Aquitaine. They added a suggestion that if this was not acceptable to Henry V then Sigismund might win him over by ceding territories carved out of the western fiefs of the Empire, 'for which extraordinary favour the King of France and his realm would be forever grateful'. There was no chance of this being acceptable to Henry V. It was substantially the deal that he had already rejected at Winchester the previous July and it appeared to have no regard to God's judgment at Agincourt. By the end of September the ambassadors had reached an impasse. On the 29th the French delegates received their passports to leave.[45]

The King's plan to have the Duke of Burgundy in Calais at the same time as the French embassy came to nothing. John the Fearless's arrival was delayed by prolonged negotiations about the guarantees which this perennially suspicious and insecure man required for his security. By the time that this was sorted out the talks with the French had already broken down. It was eventually agreed that the Duke would be exchanged at the boundary of the English pale for Henry V's brother Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, who would serve as a hostage for his safe return. Early on the morning of 4 October 1416 the two men were launched simultaneously on barges from opposite sides of the estuary of the river Aa, exchanged brief pleasantries in the middle of the stream and passed on their separate ways, John to be received with unctuous ceremony by the Earl of Warwick and Sir Thomas Erpingham at the east gate of Calais and Humphrey to the custody of the Count of Charolais at Saint-Omer.[46]

The Duke of Burgundy's first business at Calais was with Sigismund, with whom he had many outstanding issues, most of them concerned with the status of John's possessions within the German Reich. The more sensitive of these appear to have been patched up through Henry V's good offices in time to allow the usual public show of goodwill intended mainly to be noticed in

France. In the great pavilion which had been erected in front of the castle gate, the Duke bowed so low before the German King that he almost hit the ground, and the two men embraced, kissed and shared the traditional wine and spices. By comparison almost nothing is known about John's discussions with Henry V. They were conducted in the utmost secrecy in an inner chamber of the castle over a period of seven days. According to the gossip picked up by the chaplain, who wrote the fullest contemporary account, all was 'ambiguity and prevarication'. As in 1413 and 1414 there was a large element of unreality about the exchanges. Henry's main purpose in negotiating with John the Fearless had been to increase his bargaining power with the Armagnac government in Paris, who were the only people who could give him what he wanted. He had already failed in this objective before the Duke's arrival. The alternative was a military alliance with Burgundy involving the deployment of John's armies in support of an English invasion. This was certainly what Henry wanted. His chancery prepared draft letters patent which he would have liked John to issue. These recited Henry's intention of invading France now that the French had refused to do justice by his claims, thus leaving 'no other sovereign but God from whom he might seek justice'. The Duke was made to declare that, being better informed on the matter than before and 'in view of the great victories which God of his grace has awarded to the said King of England and his noble ancestors', he would henceforth support Henry's claim to the crown of France and would do homage to him for his domains as soon as Henry had conquered a 'notable part' of the country. In the meantime, the drafts declared, John the Fearless would make war with all his strength against the Armagnac governors of France and against 'all of their subjects, lands and supporters'. According to the chronicler Monstrelet, whose information probably came from gossip at the Burgundian court, Henry offered John the Fearless a share of his conquests as his reward.

Over the following years Armagnac propaganda would frequently accuse John of having signed up to these terms or something very like them. But it is clear that he did not. Apart from three drafts in the English public records, full of blanks awaiting completion, there is no trace of any completed agreement in the ample archives of either England or the dukes of Burgundy. Nor was there any reason for John to ally himself so openly with the English King. He had already achieved his main diplomatic objective in June with the treaty of neutrality. Unless Henry double-crossed him, which was admittedly possible, he was safe for at least another year against a grand coalition between the Armagnac government of France and

the King of England. Of course it suited him that his enemies in Paris should have their hands full with an English invasion in the coming months. But the breakdown of negotiations between Henry V's councillors and Regnault de Chartres meant that was likely to happen anyway. The Duke's real object in attending the conference at Calais was the same as Henry's, namely to frighten Charles VI's council into accepting his terms. A formal military alliance was not even second best. A man so sensitive to the value of propaganda as John the Fearless could not risk alienating popular opinion in Paris and the rest of France by openly aligning himself with the national enemy. Nonetheless personal meetings between principals have many advantages, one of which is that understandings can be reached without the formality of agreements between subordinates. It seems likely that by the time John the Fearless left Calais on 13 October the two men had agreed upon a measure of strategic cooperation over the following year, even if it fell well short of an alliance or an acknowledgement of Henry's claims.[47]

On 19 October 1416 Parliament opened in the Painted Chamber of the Palace of Westminster in Henry's presence to hear an extraordinary account of these events from Chancellor Beaufort. The work of God, he told them, was not done in a day. The Holy Spirit had created the world in six days and rested only on the seventh. Previous Parliaments and great councils, said Beaufort, had urged the King to negotiate with France in the hope of avoiding war and the spilling of Christian blood. No one could deny that Henry done his best. The history of his reign had been a continual struggle for peace. The Chancellor gave a tendentious account of the negotiations with Regnault de Chartres. Detailed proposals had been made, he said, worked over by illustrious diplomats but all to no avail. The French, 'sated with pride and oblivious of their weakness and defeat', had repudiated all possibility of agreement. 'Let us therefore make war so that we may have peace, for the object of all war is peace.' The Commons voted another double subsidy. Three-quarters of it was to be paid in February 1417, when indentures were now expected to be sealed for a fresh invasion of France. Collection of the rest was deferred to November 1417, but the King was specifically authorised to borrow against it in advance. The result was an inflow of money over the winter of £112,807, the largest figure for a single half-year ever achieved in the whole of the fifteenth century. Coming on top of the heavy taxes levied over the past three years it represented a financial burden which exceeded anything attempted by Edward III or Richard II. Indeed relative to the country's population and resources it exceeded anything attempted afterwards until the great wars of the eighteenth century.

The proceedings in Parliament ended in a bellicose atmosphere on 18 November 1416. Thomas Beaufort Earl of Dorset, who had proved to be the outstanding soldier of the war to date, was promoted to be Duke of Exeter with a grant of £1,000 a year from the King's revenues, 'far too small for so great a man', said the Lords. The King declared his intention to invade France in the following summer 'to subdue the adamantine obstinacy of the French which would not be softened by the sweet milk of goats or the devouring wine of vengeance or by even the most thorough diplomacy'. Yet for all the rhetoric and sabre-rattling the first signs of war weariness and tax-exhaustion were already emerging. The Commons took seriously the Chancellor's assurance that this was to be a war to end war. They imposed a condition that Henry should not seek to bring forward the collection of the second subsidy or ask for another one before it had been collected. Archbishop Chichele ordered that the feast of St Crispin on which the battle of Agincourt had been fought should henceforth be celebrated in all churches with additional lessons and prayers. But the glow of Agincourt was fading as the difficulties of exploiting the victory became apparent. Over the following months the bishops reported that appeals for prayers and processions in support of the King's next campaign were being answered 'tepidly'.[48]

The one participant who achieved nothing at Calais was Sigismund of Luxembourg. He left on 24 October for Dordrecht on the first stage of his long journey back to Constance. He had failed very publicly in his attempt to act as the arbiter of western European politics, a failure which must have wounded this proud and ambitious man. He had made a firm enemy of the government of France without obtaining any advantages in other directions. Pressed by Henry V into a superficial reconciliation with John the Fearless, Sigismund quickly rediscovered the fundamental conflicts which divided the Empire from the house of Burgundy. Within days of leaving Calais he found himself forced to avoid passing through John's territories on his way back for fear of being taken prisoner. As for his treaty with the King of England, that brought him nothing but fresh military obligations and hopeless dreams of recovering the francophone provinces of the Empire from the grip of the French Crown. Henry and Sigismund took their promises more seriously than most historians have done. Shortly after leaving Calais Sigismund wrote to the King what Henry described as a 'friendly letter' reassuring him about the 'brothers assistence that I trust to have of hym'. The problem was Sigismund's weak constitutional position in Germany. He had no power to command and no means of paying an army or even his own retinue. Arriving penniless in the

Low Countries at the end of October he was obliged to fund his expenses by pawning the gifts he had received in England with the moneylenders of Bruges, including his Garter regalia.[49]

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In France the main result of Henry's alliance with Sigismund and his public intrigue with the Duke of Burgundy was to provoke a predictable shift of public sympathy towards the government and the boldest attempt yet to create a united front against the invader. The critical figure in both developments was the Dauphin, John of Touraine. Since the death of Jean de Berry in June he had inherited the title of Duke of Berry and with it the old man's rich appanage in Berry and Poitou, thus considerably augmenting his status as well as his resources. Yet this potent symbol of authority remained what he had always been, a passive, colourless figure residing far from the centre of affairs in Hainaut, a political ingénue manipulated by his father-in-law William of Bavaria.

At the end of August 1416, as soon as he had finally committed himself to a date for his meeting with Henry V, John the Fearless had ridden to Le Quesnoy with his son Philip Count of Charolais for talks with William of Bavaria and his wife (John's sister). The object of these talks, relentlessly pursued over three days, was to prise control of the Dauphin out of William's hands. They found William completely unreceptive. His overriding concern was for the inheritance of his daughter and son-in-law. His ambitious plans for the London conference had come to nothing. He refused to attend the conference at Calais whose prospects seemed to be no better. William now thought that the only possible course for the Dauphin was to align himself with the national resistance to the historic enemy. John the Fearless was dismayed. He left Le Quesnoy wondering whether his brother-in-law and erstwhile ally had become an Armagnac.

He was right to worry. Shortly afterwards, at about the beginning of September, William of Bavaria agreed with Charles VI's Armagnac councillors that the Dauphin would return to Paris and take his place as the titular head of the council. The royal treasury was emptied of gold and silver to pay for a suitably imposing military escort. On 27 September, as the negotiations with the English were on the verge of breakdown in Calais, a courageous manifesto was issued from Le Quesnoy in the Dauphin's name addressed to the principal towns of France. The peace of Arras, he declared, had put an end to any excuse for the current divisions between Frenchmen. When the promised English invasion came he would confront the enemy in person at the head of a united nation.

In the current crisis let every man reserve his loyalty for the King alone and hold himself ready to fight as soon as he was called on.[50]

The Dauphin's appeal for unity struck a powerful chord with important interests in Paris and probably with the great majority of Frenchmen. For a few months it seemed that a way had been found to reconcile the parties. The Queen, armed with her powers under the ordinances, began to work towards a compromise which would see her son installed in his proper position in Paris and an honourable place reserved for the Duke of Burgundy in the counsels of the King. Her efforts were seconded by influential figures who had previously been cowed by the Constable's imperious personality: the Duke of Anjou, who forced himself to swallow his fear and hatred of John the Fearless; a significant minority on the royal council, men whose sympathies were with the Armagnacs but who were terrified that the Duke of Burgundy might join forces with Henry V; and the Duke of Brittany, an old friend and ally of the Queen who shared her views and was now summoned urgently to the capital to support her.

The Duke of Burgundy, with his habitual sensitivity to the drift of events, was adaptable enough to cooperate and perfectly content to jettison his treaty of neutrality with Henry V if that was the price. Pressed by William of Bavaria and his wife, he returned to Hainaut accompanied once again by Philip of Charolais and many of the leading lights of his court. He met William at Valenciennes on 9 November 1416. Tremendous feasts and entertainments were laid on for them. In the background of the laughter and noise William persuaded his brother-in-law to renounce all his arrangements with the English. On 12 November they reached agreement. There appears to have been no written record. Instead it took the form of a series of carefully scripted oral undertakings exchanged between John the Fearless, the Count and Countess of Hainaut, and the Dauphin. They agreed that William would escort the Dauphin to Paris. Within a fortnight of his arrival there the Duke of Burgundy would be summoned to the Queen's presence and reconciled with the King. In return John the Fearless undertook to live in peace with his erstwhile enemies except for the Duke of Anjou, whom he could never forgive for having repudiated his daughter, and to act jointly with William of Bavaria to protect the interests of the King and the Dauphin. In the meantime William promised that he 'would not allow the Dauphin to come into the power of anyone in whom he could not be confident'. He made it clear that he would not personally fight the English. He was not a Frenchman. He had been a knight of the Garter for a quarter of a century. The links of his house with England were too close. But he extracted an undertaking

that John the Fearless would contribute all his strength and influence to the defence of France against the coming English invasion. The Dauphin's departure for Paris was fixed for the end of November.[51]

Not everyone was content with this attempt to force an accommodation with John the Fearless on the royal council in Paris. There followed a long battle of wills in the capital between the Queen's supporters and the allies of the Constable. The Armagnac ultras were in a difficult position. They controlled Paris and the person of the King and they had at their disposal the largest military force in northern France. Legally, however, the authority of the state lay with the Queen and the Dauphin in Charles VI's 'absence'. At the beginning of December 1416 the Dauphin and his father-in-law set out from Le Quesnoy and advanced at a stately pace towards Paris. They were accompanied by a 'noble company fit for a King's son', in reality a small army, and by a group of John the Fearless's closest councillors led by that master of diplomatic intrigue Regnier Pot. Seen from Paris the Dauphin's cavalcade looked very like a Burgundian triumphal march. It was obliged to stop for long periods at the main towns on their route while the factions argued among themselves in the capital. All the news from the city was that the Constable and his friends, although more than happy to see the Dauphin return to Paris, were not willing to let in his military escort or to allow him to act as regent if he proposed to let in the Duke of Burgundy. Many of them feared for their jobs, some for their lives. They declared that they would 'rather die and see the kingdom lost than admit the Duke of Burgundy'. The Queen, who had planned to join her son on the road at Saint-Quentin, failed to appear, probably because she was prevented from leaving Paris. Towards the end of December Isabelle sent the Duke of Brittany to the town to represent her. But he came accompanied by three emissaries of Bernard of Armagnac led by his chief lieutenant, the Gascon *routier* Ramonet de la Guerre. They must have made the Constable's position brutally clear.[52]

At the beginning of January 1417, shortly after John of Brittany's return from Saint-Quentin, occurred one of those chances liable to upset all political calculations. Charles VI enjoyed one of his increasingly rare interludes of lucidity. It is hard to say how much he understood of what was going on about him. What little we know of his opinions in these periods of remission suggests a very tenuous connection with reality. But he was coherent enough to preside in council and to make his wishes known from time to time. The Duke of Brittany worked his way into his confidence and succeeded briefly in wresting control of the council from the

Constable. As a result the political mood in Paris abruptly changed. The Duke of Brittany escorted the Dauphin from Saint-Quentin to Compiègne on the next stage of his advance on the capital. The Parlement and the University sent delegations before him urging him to enter the city and assume control of the government. The Dauphin was nominated as the King's titular lieutenant in all matters relating to war. The Queen was finally able to leave the oppressive atmosphere of the city and on 21 January installed herself twenty miles from Compiègne in the old royal palace of Senlis, together with the Duke of Brittany and a large part of the royal council. The principals and their messengers passed constantly between the two courts making the final arrangements for the prince's triumphal entry into his capital.[53]

It was not to be. The evidence is fragmentary and ambiguous, but what appears to have happened is that at about the end of January the Duke of Brittany left for Angers to discuss the situation with Louis of Anjou. In his absence the King suffered a relapse and the Constable recovered control in Paris. On about 18 February 1417 Bernard of Armagnac appeared without warning at Senlis. There he abruptly brought the discussions with the Dauphin to an end and sent the Queen and her court away. Early in March Armagnac arrived at Compiègne with Regnault de Chartres and a group of councillors, all firm Armagnac partisans. If it had not been for William of Bavaria and his soldiers they would probably have taken the prince back to Paris there and then. Instead for a few days they conducted the business of the government from Compiègne. They worked on the impressionable Dauphin with a view to detaching him from his father-in-law. They flattered his burgeoning vanity. They held council meetings in his presence. They laid draft ordinances before him. They opened up the French royal treasury to his whims. By the time they left Compiègne to return to Paris John of Touraine was inclined to follow them, on their terms. William of Bavaria, sensing that his advantages were slipping away, decided to bring the issue to a head. He rode to Paris and on 30 March attended a meeting of the council in the presence of the King and the Constable and his allies. He came straight to the point. The Dauphin would not be allowed to return to Paris, he said, except as part of a deal which restored the Duke of Burgundy to his proper place at the centre of affairs. Unless this was agreed or some other means found to bring peace to the kingdom he would take the Dauphin back to Hainaut. The Armagnac councillors were thunderstruck. That night the Constable resolved to arrest the Count of Hainaut and hold him as a hostage for the surrender of the Dauphin. But William was tipped off in time. He left the city very

early the next morning apparently heading for the suburban monastery of Saint-Maur, an important local shrine. But once his party was clear of the gates they galloped off towards Compiègne. William arrived there that evening to find his political world falling apart. The eighteen-year-old Dauphin, whose health had never been good, had been taken ill with a large abscess on the side of his neck. His tongue was swollen and his eyes bulging. He was finding it increasingly difficult to breathe. The doctors, summoned urgently from Paris, could do nothing for him. At about midday on 5 April he died. Few men can have been more relieved than the Count of Armagnac.[54]

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Around the time of the Christmas and New Year celebrations at the English court the Duke of Bourbon asked to speak privately to Henry V. Bourbon had evidently come to regret his obduracy during the London conference in June. He told Henry that he had sent for materials from France relating to the English claim to the French crown. He thought that he understood it, but he had always regarded it as a mere bargaining counter. Both Henry himself and his councillors had given him to understand that he was willing to renounce it in return for the French provinces ceded at Brétigny plus Harfleur and its immediate hinterland. Henry did not deny this. It was substantially the position he had taken during the conference. Bourbon said that he regarded this as a 'grete and reasonable profre'. He thought that he could persuade the other prisoners to agree and suggested that he and Raoul de Gaucourt the Younger should be allowed to return to Paris on parole to press it on Charles VI's council in Paris before France was invaded again in the summer. If the French royal council was not prepared to agree he would do homage to Henry V as King of France for all his domains and castles in France and urge others to do likewise. As for the terms of the parole, the prisoners were prepared to pledge themselves for 40,000 *écus* as security for Gaucourt's return. Bourbon himself would put up a banker's bond of 200,000 *écus* for himself and bring his two sons to England to serve as hostages.

Henry was clearly taken aback. He consulted Bishop Langley of Durham and two other councillors. Their advice was that the proposal should be accepted, subject to the amount of Bourbon's bond being increased to 240,000 *écus*. They thought that there was some risk of Bourbon and Gaucourt absconding but that the risk was worth taking in order to restart negotiations with the French government. In the event Bourbon's initiative came to nothing because he was unable to raise the security in time. Gaucourt was

paroled until 31 March to return to France. But he did not have the same personal influence as the Duke of Bourbon and he cut no ice with the politicians in Paris. The incident is nonetheless revealing. It showed how far the prisoners of Agincourt in England had lost heart as each fresh report from across the Channel confirmed France's slide into civil war and the prospect of a lifetime of imprisonment in a hostile land unfolded before them. It is also perhaps the clearest record of Henry V's war aims as he prepared to launch his second invasion of Normandy. In Paris Henry's price was by now well known. The Armagnac ministers had resolved not to pay it even if it meant facing two enemies at once. There would be no further diplomatic exchanges of any substance between England and France for more than a year.[55]

At the time of Henry V's exchange with the Duke of Bourbon preparations for his second invasion of France had already begun. Several dozen captains had been asked to notify the King's officers how many men-at-arms and archers they would be able to lead to France. In February 1417 they appeared before the council at the London Blackfriars to enter into their indentures. The total indented strength of the new army was about 3,000 men-at-arms and 9,000 archers, only slightly smaller than the army of 1415. The indentures called for a year's service and required every company to bring enough victuals to feed itself for six months. A powerful siege train was planned, 'ordnance gadred and welle stuffyd, as [be]longyd to such a ryalle King', wrote the London chronicler, '… that is to say armure, gonnes, tripgettis, engynes, sowes, brydges of lethir, scaling laddres, mallis, spades'. At least 1,000 carpenters, masons, miners and other artificers were recruited. Together with the royal clerks, chaplains and craftsmen, the whole force must have amounted to something like the 16,400 men given by contemporary chroniclers. The plan was for the expedition to sail in the first half of May.[56] In the event it was delayed by nearly three months. The main problems, as always, were shipping capacity and money.

More than 800 ships would be needed to carry the army across the Channel with all of its horses, stores and equipment. Requisitioning of merchant shipping began early, at the end of January 1417, but is unlikely to have supplied more than 300 vessels. Some large transports were requisitioned from foreign merchantmen found in English ports. They included at least nine Venetian and six Genoese cogs and three ships of the German Hanse towns taken into English service by the Admirals' officers to the fury of their masters. The service of the Cinque Ports added another fifty-seven. This left a significant shortfall which was only partly filled by chartering ships abroad, in Holland, Zeeland and Brabant.

For reasons which are unclear they were becoming more difficult to find. At least 129 chartered foreign ships are recorded in the invasion fleet of 1417, less than a fifth of the number hired for the previous invasion. The list may not be complete but on any view there was a serious shortage of transports and it ultimately proved necessary to carry the army to France in two successive passages.[57]

The major change since 1415 was the rapid expansion of the King's own fleet. Henry V had inherited just eight ships from his father, mostly small, but four years into his reign he possessed a substantial fleet: two 'great ships', three Genoese carracks captured by the Duke of Bedford in the battle off Harfleur, seven other sailing vessels and eleven oared barges and balingers. Several more had been under construction in the Solent and on the Rother since the previous autumn under the supervision of William Catton of Winchelsea, Clerk of the King's Ships. These ships, together with captured Italian and Castilian prizes, would eventually bring the royal fleet to more than thirty vessels. This sudden attention to the 'royal' navy in a country which had traditionally relied on privateers and on requisitioned and chartered merchantmen was a direct response to the French tactic of blockading the major river estuaries of the Atlantic coast. France's Genoese and Castilian allies were deploying large armed carracks of several hundred tons burden, which had no equivalent in the English merchant marine. These immense ships were less manoeuvrable than the smaller English cogs, but they carried more soldiers and their height was a major advantage in an age when boarding and ramming were the main techniques of maritime warfare and bows and arrows its principal weapons. Henry V's first 'great ship', the *Trinity Royal,* which had served as his flagship in 1415, had a capacity of 540 tons. More recent acquisitions were larger. The *Holigost*, a reconstructed Castilian prize, carried 760 tons and the *Jesus*, completed the previous November, was at 1,000 tons much the largest ship in England. These were true fighting ships, not transports. Some of them were fitted with cannon. The *Holigost* had seven. 'Whate hope yt was the kynge's grette entente of the shippes and what in mynde he mente?', asked the functionary who wrote the *Libelle of Englyshe Policye* in the next reign, when all this had passed into the realm of nostalgia and recrimination; 'it was not ellis but that he caste to be Lorde round aboute enviroun of the see'.[58]

The main challenge in 1417, as in earlier years, was finance. The captains were entitled to their first quarter's pay before embarkation. As the date of embarkation approached there was no money in hand. It had to be borrowed over a period of several

weeks, during which men and ships were sitting idle at the ports, uselessly accruing crew wages and hire charges. Towards the end of April 1417 the government resolved upon a forced loan. A large number of prominent men were summoned by name to appear before the King and his council at Reading and Salisbury to be assessed for loans, and commissioners were sent to tour the counties looking for rich individuals, towns and religious houses to be mulcted. Nearly 300 loans were raised by these methods, amounting altogether to £31,595. Nearly half of this came from one man, Henry's uncle Chancellor Beaufort, who made a massive loan of £14,000 in early June against the future customs receipts of Southampton. The whole process exemplified the hand-to-mouth procedures of medieval war finance. As money came into the treasury it went straight out again to pay the troops assembling at Southampton and Salisbury and the shipmasters and seamen dispersed in harbours from Kent to Cornwall. Meanwhile the embarkation date of the army was deferred week by week.[59]

Henry V was characteristically secretive about his plans and in some respects they evolved in the course of the year.[60] The original intention was to land the army at Harfleur. From there Henry intended to resume the strategy which had been frustrated in 1415 by the determined resistance of Harfleur and the loss of much of his army to dysentery. The plan involved the methodical conquest of Normandy town by town, castle by castle, if necessary over a considerable period of time. Henry needed to conquer and hold enough territory to be self-sustaining both militarily and financially. Otherwise the entire cost of the war in France would fall on the population of England, as in effect it had done under Edward III and Richard II. Henry knew enough history to realise that the English political class was unwilling and probably unable to bear this burden for more than a relatively short period. He would have to establish some form of administration in the conquered territories. Looting would be no substitute for taxation and fear no substitute for authority. Henry V, with his attention to finance and administration, came to understand these things better than his famous forebears. In Normandy he intended to step into the void of authority left by the civil wars of France in the way that Edward III had never been able to do.

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Henry V's invasion plan of 1417 had originally been conceived as part of a triple assault on the heartlands of the French kingdom launched simultaneously from England, Germany and the domains of the house of Burgundy. This ambitious idea, reminiscent of the

north European coalitions of Edward I and the early years of Edward III, had suffered a setback when the Duke of Burgundy refused at Calais to enter into a formal alliance and then began to scheme with the Queen and William of Bavaria to return to power in Paris. As for the German wing of the alliance it is difficult to know how much confidence Henry V had ever had in it. In the treaty of Canterbury Sigismund of Luxembourg had promised to participate in the invasion although the precise nature and extent of his participation had not been specified. Early in January 1417 no fewer than three of Henry's most influential counsellors, Sir John Tiptoft, Philip Morgan and Hartung von Klux, were with Sigismund in Luxembourg trying to pin him down. They finally obtained letters patent in which the German King promised to have a large army on France's eastern frontier by midsummer. There was every sign that he meant it. He addressed a formal letter of defiance to Charles VI. He tried to reassert the long-defunct rights of the Empire in the Dauphiné and even threatened to transfer the territory, part of the Dauphin's appanage, to one of Henry V's brothers. His agents canvassed support among the princes of the Empire and received promises amounting to 3,000 men-at-arms.[61] How the impecunious Sigismund could ever have paid these men is entirely unclear. The point was never put to the test because his plans were frustrated by opposition in the Council of Constance.

The German King returned to Constance on 27 January 1417 after an absence of more than eighteen months. He found the atmosphere much changed. The city was ringing with the echoes of the Anglo-French war and the vendettas of Armagnac and Burgundy. A major issue had arisen between the French and Burgundian delegations about the theological orthodoxy of Jean Petit's defence of the murder of Louis of Orléans, which Jean Gerson and the other French leaders were determined to have condemned as heretical. A noisy dispute was in progress between the English and French delegations about the voting system. The French were trying to force the English to merge with the Germans in a single 'nation' with one vote between them. Each side published venomous pamphlets in praise of their own nation and at one point the rival delegations came close to fighting it out in the streets. Into this difficult situation Sigismund injected his own brand of bravado, tactlessness and misjudgment. He made his entry into the city ostentatiously wearing the livery collar of Lancaster around his neck and accompanied by Henry V's personal representative Sir John Tiptoft. He had frequent private colloquies with the English delegates. He made offensive and indiscreet remarks about the French, which were widely broadcast. He attended High Mass

before the entire Council dressed in his Garter robes.

When, at the end of March 1417, Sigismund publicly proclaimed his intention to declare war on France the announcement caused consternation. The French delegates were naturally outraged but the protests did not come just from them. Even the German delegates, who were generally sympathetic to England, were uneasy and almost all of Sigismund's councillors were reported to have been opposed. The Germans, Italians and Spanish sent a deputation to Sigismund to protest. If the presiding authority of the Council were to make war on one of the participating nations, they pointed out, all its work would be undone. The French government would probably withdraw its delegation and refuse to acknowledge any Pope that the Council might elect. The Italians and Spanish might well follow suit. The Council would disintegrate and the schism would continue. Sigismund had no answer to these points. Ultimately he cared more about healing the schism and reforming the Church than forwarding the international ambitions of the King of England. So, with evident reluctance, he agreed to defer his declaration of war. In the end he never issued it.[62]

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The new Dauphin of France, the third in the space of fifteen months, was Charles Count of Ponthieu, the eleventh of the twelve children of Charles VI and Isabelle of Bavaria and their only surviving son. A silent, moody child with the poor health that characterised all of his family, Charles had been betrothed at an early age to a daughter of Louis Duke of Anjou and had been brought up in the household of his future parents-in-law. The dominant figure in his life was the formidable Duchess of Anjou, Yolande of Aragon, who stood in a long tradition of powerful and determined women in the house of Anjou. Charles had reached his fourteenth birthday on 22 February 1417 and was therefore technically of age. But he was as yet devoid of political experience. Like his dead brother John he had not been expected to succeed to the throne and like him had been shielded from the faction fights of the capital. Much of his life had been passed at the Duke of Anjou's court at Angers and at Tarascon in Provence, where life was sweeter than it was in Paris. The Angevin court was an important nursery of ambitious politicians and talented administrators, whose instincts had generally been Orléanist and Armagnac. And, although the Duke's own sympathies had varied, he had in recent years been a consistent and vehement opponent of John the Fearless. How much of this had rubbed off on Charles of Ponthieu is difficult to say. His own political education had not begun until the end of 1415, when as a twelve-year-old boy

he had been brought to Paris in the aftermath of the disaster at Agincourt and began to attend selected council meetings under the watchful eyes of the Duke of Anjou and the Count of Armagnac.[63]

When John of Touraine died, however, Charles was not in Paris. His mother had taken him with her when she left the city to arrange John of Touraine's entry into the capital. After her expulsion from Senlis by the Constable she had established herself with her son in the castle of Vincennes. There, behind the walls of the fortress, Isabelle began to build up a private army with the aid of the master of her household, Louis de Bosredon, a man of impeccable Armagnac credentials who had previously served Jean de Berry, Charles of Orléans and the Constable himself. He was supported by the Auvergnat Pierre lord of Giac, whose sympathies were mainly with the court of Burgundy and Jean de Graville, a refugee from the Pays de Caux. It is tolerably clear that Isabelle was planning to do with the new Dauphin what she had tried to do with his late brother, and set him up as the King's representative at the head of a government that would be neither Armagnac nor Burgundian. Since the Queen was now the sole legitimate source of power according to the ordinances, this was a mortal threat to the Constable's government.[64]

On the afternoon of 18 April 1417 Bernard of Armagnac marched on Vincennes with Tanneguy du Châtel and a troop of soldiers, accompanied by the pliable figure of the King. Louis de Bosredon and Charles of Ponthieu came out to meet them on the road, a traditional gesture of respect. It was not a happy encounter. Bosredon was arrested at once and escorted back to Paris, where he was thrown in prison. The lords of Graville and Giac fled, together with much of the Queen's bodyguard. The Constable took possession of the fortress without opposition. There he separated Isabelle from her children, Charles and Catherine. Then he disbanded her court and cut off her revenues. It took some time to decide what to do with her. She declared her intention of withdrawing to her fortress at Melun. But this would have left her far too independent for the Constable's liking. So she was escorted under guard to the austere eleventh-century keep of Tours where she was for practical purposes a prisoner. Her household officers were dismissed and new household staff assigned to her, headed by a royal clerk and stuffed with creatures of the Constable. A low-ranking 'keeper', Laurent Dupuis, was assigned to watch over her movements and censor her correspondence, and treated her with contempt, declining to bow or doff his cap in her presence. In public the explanation given for her fall was the extravagance and debauchery of her court. Most people were happy to believe this. The Queen was not popular and there

had been persistent gossip about her court for years. As for Louis de Bosredon the Constable never forgave him. He was held for a time in irons in the fortress of Montlhéry south of Paris. Eventually he was brought back to the Châtelet in Paris, where he was sown up in a leather bag and drowned in the Seine at dead of night.[65]

The news of the Queen's arrest reached the Duke of Burgundy at his castle at Hesdin in Picardy. It marked the extinction of his last chance of undermining the Armagnac regime from within and determined him to declare war on the government in Paris. A council of his kinsmen, councillors and captains was summoned urgently to Hesdin. With their support John issued an inflammatory manifesto on 25 April 1417. In this cleverly drawn document he took aim at the whole conduct of French public finance for a generation past. When he had inherited his domains in 1404 and had taken his place in the counsels of the King, he said, he had found the kingdom racked by corruption and plundered by officials, 'nobodies, men without lineage whose sole purpose was to get together to control the public finances and divert the resources of the state into their own pockets'. As one of the King's closest kinsmen and the senior peer of France it was his duty to do something about this. John claimed that he had throughout his public life been associated with the cause of reform. He had publicly denounced those responsible for despoiling the Crown at the opening of the Estates-General. He had promoted the Cabochian ordinance with the support of the University of Paris. But all his efforts had been frustrated by a coven of thieves who had expelled him from court, revoked the ordinance and imposed *tailles* and forced loans one after the other on an oppressed and impoverished population. They had neglected the defences of the land, courting disaster at Agincourt. They had sustained themselves in power by conducting a reign of terror in Paris and poisoning both Dauphins. John the Fearless called on all loyal Frenchmen to help him destroy their 'tyranny, inhumanity, treachery, vindictiveness, cruelty, vanity and avarice'. He promised much. He would do everything in his power to protect the realm from ruin at the hands of these 'traitors, rebels, perjurers, tyrants, murderers, looters and poisoners'. He would restore order to the government of the realm, punish the guilty men who had destroyed it and bring relief from the unending succession of 'taxes, *aides*, impositions, *tailles, gabelles,* tenths, forced loans, pillage, robberies and other exactions'.[66]

All of this was bad history and poor political economy. But it was inspired propaganda. John the Fearless's officials toured the towns of his domains reading out the document in public and calling for the formal support of the inhabitants. Copies were carried round the

principal towns of northern France and nailed to church doors. In May and June 1417 a wave of anti-government emotion swept across the realm. The Duke was fortunate, or perhaps skilful, in his timing. Some weeks earlier the government had ordered the collection of a *taille* to fund the defence of France against the English, the third in as many years. It was described as 'the smallest possible' but even so appears to have amounted to about 750,000 *livres*, one of the heaviest impositions of the period. In most towns the arrival of the Duke of Burgundy's manifesto followed shortly upon the appearance of the collectors. At Reims, Châlons, Troyes and Auxerre the Duke's messengers were received with public demonstrations of enthusiasm. Several towns repudiated the authority of the King's officers. At Amiens the Duke of Burgundy called on the townsmen to expel their royal *bailli*, an old retainer of Louis of Orléans, and after much agonising they eventually did so. At Abbeville the mayor and magistrates refused to allow the collection of royal taxes. At Rouen the arrival of the Duke's manifesto was followed by riots, as mobs of men shouted abuse at the tax collectors and filled the streets with shouts of 'Vive Bourgogne!'[67]

Elated by the success of his manifesto John the Fearless followed it up by sending heralds into the northern cities to proclaim from the street corners that all taxes were remitted and were not to be paid. Across the region this was the signal for mobs to invade the lodgings of the collectors and throw the contributors' rolls onto public bonfires. As spring turned to summer the tide of declarations for the Duke of Burgundy swelled to a flood. What had induced so many people suddenly to become Burgundians, asked the chronicler of Saint-Denis, habitually suspicious of popular movements? The answer that he received was the same everywhere. It was the burden of taxation and weariness of the unending civil war, for which they were increasingly inclined to blame the Armagnac council in Paris. John the Fearless's promise to suppress the *aides* and the *gabelle* was fundamentally dishonest, for he knew that in government he would be unable to do without them. But there is no doubt that it transformed his political fortunes. Shortly the pressure of opinion was backed by force. At the end of May 1417 bands of soldiers commanded by Jean de Fosseux, Ferri de Mailly and other Burgundian captains crossed the Somme and rode through the northern provinces attacking towns which had not yet declared for the Duke of Burgundy. Their companies included many exiled Cabochians, men burning for revenge against the government which had ruined them.[68]

These events coincided with a severe financial crisis in Paris. In

many parts of France the *taille* had proved to be uncollectable even before the appearance of John the Fearless's manifesto. A second *taille* appears to have been imposed with no better results. Early in May the council turned to other expedients. They devalued the coinage. The gold *écu*, which had been minted since 1385, was abolished and replaced by a new gold coin at a slightly lower level of fineness known as the *agnel* after the paschal lamb shown on the reverse side. The *blanc*, which had not been minted for some time but was still the most widely used silver coin, was reissued at about four-fifths of its previous value. All of this generated work for the mints and profit for the government, but it would never have been enough to finance a war on two fronts even in more settled conditions. The royal council, at its wits' end for funds, appointed a special commission to find ways of raising money somehow. On 24 May 1417 the commissioners appeared before the council in the chamber of the Parlement to explain that they could not comply and to offer their resignations. Their spokesman was the chief commissioner Raymond Raguier, a former war treasurer and one of the special targets of the Estates-General of 1413. He produced a pile of paper setting out the current state of the government's finances. In summary, said Raguier, there was just enough cash to meet existing commitments for the next month but after that, nothing. Over the following four or five months the government would need another 800,000 or 900,000 francs. They had no idea where this was going to come from.[69]

At this point the discussion was interrupted by the arrival of two officers of the Châtelet, who entered the chamber bearing a sealed copy of the Duke of Burgundy's manifesto just received from Rouen. The document was read out before the company. The councillors were taken aback by the virulence of John the Fearless's diatribe. Their first reaction was incredulity. They dismissed it as a forgery. Then panic, as it became clear that John really was intent on their destruction at any price. They turned to the possibility of negotiating with him. Four successive council meetings failed to reach a decision on this question. The Count of Armagnac had no intention of negotiating with the Duke of Burgundy. By the end of May 1417, when the government was losing control of much of northern France, he resolved to take matters into his own hands. A proclamation was issued from Paris warning all those who had declared for the Duke of Burgundy to return to their allegiance to the Crown within two weeks. In June, when this had produced no result, the Constable decided upon a show of force. A mixed troop of men-at-arms and Genoese crossbowmen was sent to occupy Péronne on the Somme and launch raids into Artois and Picardy.

Ramonet de la Guerre went north with another 600 men-at-arms and joined forces with troops already recruited by Thomas de Larzy, the fanatical Armagnac *bailli* of Vermandois. They conducted a merciless sweep through the territory recently visited by the Burgundian companies. The trees were bowed down beneath the weight of hanged men. But Ramonet was defeated with heavy losses when he tried to stop the Burgundians capturing the important bridge-town of Neufchâtel on the Aisne north of Reims. He was forced to retreat to the Seine and the Oise in the hope of forming a defensive line north of Paris. Defensive warfare was not the Constable's way but the truth was that he lacked the manpower for any other strategy. He had to maintain a strong garrison in the capital as well as defend the approaches to the city. But he trusted no one other than committed political allies and his own Gascon and Breton companies.[70]

Beyond the walls of Paris the effective reach of Bernard of Armagnac's regime shrank to the immediate hinterland of the city, Lower Normandy and the provinces of the Loire. Yet inside Paris his grip on power had never been stronger. Police surveillance was tightened in the streets. Oaths of loyalty were administered to prominent citizens. Anyone whose opinions were suspected for good reasons or bad was expelled, some 200 citizens and ninety members of the University in the course of the summer including many advocates of the Parlement and some of the judges of the Châtelet. Others fled before their turn came. On the royal council the Constable's position was beyond challenge. The death of Louis of Anjou at the end of April, following upon the death of Jean de Berry and the exile of the Queen, removed the last notable independent voice. The heads of the princely houses of France, apart from Burgundy and Brittany, were now all prisoners or minors. On 14 June 1417 the Dauphin Charles, an inexperienced child, was appointed as president of the royal council during the King's 'absences'. The young prince had by now been granted a vast appanage comprising not only the Dauphiné but the provinces of Touraine, Berry and Poitou. His presence at the centre of affairs served to cover the government's acts with a veil of legitimacy and a prestige far greater than the Count of Armagnac's. Yet the Constable made no attempt to conceal the realities of power or the increasingly personal character of his rule. At council meetings he arrogated precedence to himself and took the chair even when the Chancellor was present. His followers processed through the streets of Paris with his banner held aloft and dressed the King in his livery, while their wives draped his armorial sash over the statues of the saints in the city's churches.[71]

At about the beginning of June 1417 the Duke of Burgundy summoned an army to march on Paris. The men were ordered to muster on 1 August in Picardy. The timing was dictated by the need to concentrate contingents recruited across the whole of John's far-flung domains in Artois, Burgundy and Champagne as well as in those of his allies the Dukes of Lorraine and Savoy. Flanders contributed no troops but its Estates agreed to pay a special *aide* of 200,000 *livres* of Paris, the largest subsidy that John the Fearless had ever received from them. A small embassy was despatched to England. Its leading light was the Burgundian nobleman Guillaume de Champdivers, one of John the Fearless's chamberlains, who was destined to become the chief agent of John's dealings with the English King. Henry V received them early in July in Porchester castle, where he had set up his headquarters while the final preparations for his expedition were completed. The ostensible purpose of their mission was to negotiate an extension of the commercial truce between England and Flanders. But they were also charged to extend John the Fearless's personal treaty of neutrality with Henry V, which was due to expire at the end of September. Guillaume de Champdivers had been deeply involved in the preparation of John's military offensive. His retinue was one of the largest in John the Fearless's army. It is hardly conceivable that the shape of the coming campaign was not discussed at Porchester. It was in both princes' interests to coordinate their movements so as to force the French government to fight simultaneously on two fronts.[72]

The French King's council knew nothing of Guillaume de Champdivers' mission. But they had plenty of other reasons to think that the English and Burgundians were acting in concert. They received the news of the Duke of Burgundy's summons with dismay and redoubled their efforts to refill the state's coffers in the face of imminent disaster. The Dauphin was sent to the Loire valley with a dignified retinue to raise money and recruit troops in the region where Orléanist sentiment was strongest. In Paris the Constable, whose grasp of finance was notoriously poor, told the council and the financial departments that money would have to be found at once by whatever means fair or foul that they could devise. A steep forced loan was imposed on the richer inhabitants of Paris. Suitable lenders would receive a polite request and a promise of security before the commissioners proceeded to more abrasive methods: threats and menaces, seizure of movable property, sequestration of revenues, billeting of troops. The city of Paris sold bonds and annuities to raise cash and imposed a special tax on every citizen.[73]

At the beginning of June 1417 a belated attempt was made to

address the state's structural deficit. The council reviewed the whole field of public finance and proposed a slate of measures designed to increase the King's revenues by 650,000 francs. There was to be a sustained assault on the luxuriant growth of privileges and exemptions which had reduced the yield of royal taxes over the years. All exemptions from the *aides* were to be abolished. The grants made to royal princes of the right to take the *aides* in their appanages were to be reviewed and if possible replaced by the payment of war wages for such armed service as they actually performed. The clergy, another exempt category, were to be mulcted with a tax of a tenth of their incomes. The costs of the households of the King, the Queen and the Dauphin were to be pruned by 80,000 francs a year. As an afterthought it was proposed to seize the Queen's treasury at Melun, which was believed to contain 50,000 francs worth of bullion and jewellery. In addition the council proposed to increase the rate of the *gabelle* and impose a supplementary *aide* on wine entering walled towns for sale. But by far the most important proposal was to raise 300,000 francs by manipulating the value of the coinage to generate work at the mints. This technique, the classic response of governments to the problems of collecting taxes, marked a reversion to the methods which had done so much to discredit the ministers of Philip VI and John II in the previous century. The whole programme of measures would have covered only two-thirds of the shortfall for the current year even if it had all been implemented and had met the optimistic expectations of the officials who devised it. But it proved difficult to implement in the disordered conditions of the summer of 1417 and in the face of the tax strike engineered by the Duke of Burgundy. The devaluations went ahead. So did the increase in the *gabelle*. The castle of Melun was seized and the Queen's treasury broken open but found to contain less than had been thought. The other measures, including all the proposals for the reform of exemptions, were ultimately abandoned.[74]

The result of the penury and shrinking authority of the government was that there was no French field army to confront the substantial forces being collected by Henry V at Southampton, and no arrangements in hand to recruit one, the first time that such a thing had happened since the outset of the Anglo-French wars in the 1330s. France's only forward defence against invasion was a powerful naval squadron which was engaged in blockading Harfleur against the expected arrival of the English invasion fleet. It included another Genoese contract fleet comprising nine carracks, which had been based in the Seine estuary since its arrival from the Mediterranean in March. These were very large ships of up to 600

tons burden, which had been fitted with stone-throwing catapults. They were supported by twenty-six chartered ships of Castile and an uncertain number of converted merchantmen requisitioned in Norman ports. The shipmasters had probably been paid up front before leaving their home ports, but as a result of the French government's financial difficulties their complements of soldiers were seriously below strength. On 29 June 1417 the flotilla was attacked by an English fleet which descended without warning on the Seine under the command of Sir John Holland, now Earl of Huntingdon. Huntingdon had with him two of the King's 'great ships', the *Trinity Royal* and the *Holigost*. His other ships were much smaller than the Genoese vessels and took a considerable battering in the early stages of the fight. But according to French reports he had three times as many men-at-arms as the opposing fleet as well as a large force of archers. Once the English ships were able to put grappling irons over the decks of the enemy and board them it was an unequal fight. Four of the Genoese carracks were captured and taken back to England to be added to the King's fleet. The remaining carracks fled south to take refuge in the harbours of northern Brittany while the rest of the French fleet dispersed. None of them took any further part in the fighting this year. The many prisoners included the Bastard of Bourbon, who had commanded on the French side. This disaster, which opened up the Seine to the English transport fleet, was due, said the chronicler of Saint-Denis, to the council's inability to collect taxes or pay the wages of its soldiers.[75]

There was now nothing to stop the English army of invasion except for the garrisons of the principal towns and castles of Normandy. Some effort had been made to put these places in a state of defence. Commissioners had been appointed to supply and garrison them. Normandy, being in the front line, was one of the few provinces of the north where taxes were still being paid and for a time the commissioners were able to draw the cost of its defence directly from the local receivers. But they had to compete for both men and money with the defence of Paris against the Duke of Burgundy. There were large garrisons at Honfleur and Caen in Lower Normandy and at Montivilliers in the Pays de Caux. The remaining troops in Normandy were dispersed in small packets between several dozen castles of the region. Their pay was in arrears and some of them had taken to living off the country, pillaging and kidnapping as if they were in a foreign land. As a result, the commissioners' attempts to reinforce the garrisons were received with hostility and occasionally with violence from the inhabitants. Rouen, the largest and richest city of Normandy and

the gateway to the Seine valley, had just a hundred men in garrison, all of them in the citadel. When the commissioners tried to install a garrison in the lower town the streets were taken over by an angry mob led by a Burgundian demagogue called Alain Blanchard, who shut them out. They were foreigners, the citizens said, in other words Gascons and Bretons.[76]

The armies of the Duke of Burgundy were already on the move. By mid-June 1417 the Duchess, who served as her husband's lieutenant in Burgundy, had raised about 3,500 men in the duchy and county. They had already begun to march north from Dijon, accompanied by about 800 Savoyards, to join the Duke in Picardy. John's retainers in Flanders, Artois and Picardy were due to muster separately in July on the Somme east of Amiens. The French government's response was disorganised and incoherent. In Paris the Constable had about 3,000 men under arms, but they were glued to the spot by the need to hold down the population of the city. The only other field force at the government's disposal consisted of between 2,000 and 3,000 men raised by the Dauphin in Poitou, Maine and the Loire provinces. In early July this force was encamped around Angers. It was not nearly enough to contain the flood tide of defections to the Duke of Burgundy across northern France. Learning of the rebellion of Rouen, the Dauphin made straight for the city. Then, passing through Chartres, he received the news that the contingents from Burgundy had reached the River Armance and were poised to invade Champagne. The walled town of Saint-Florentin, which controlled the main crossing of the Armance, was under siege. Neither Charles nor his advisers knew which way to turn. They eventually decided to detach some 1,800 men under the command of Jean de Torsay, the Master of the Royal Archers. These men headed east, hoping to reach Saint-Florentin in time to raise the siege. The Dauphin meanwhile pressed on to Rouen with the rest.[77]

On 23 July the Dauphin arrived before the gates of Rouen. Inside the city all the tragedy of France was being played out between a tiny group of angry and frightened local politicians. The *bailli* Raoul de Gaucourt the Elder, a distinguished administrator and a minor poet who had once been a chamberlain of Louis of Orléans, was loyal to the government of the Constable. He and his deputy resolved to open the gates for the Dauphin. That night a band of masked men led by the mobster Alain Blanchard murdered both of them in their homes and threw their bodies into the Seine. On the following morning the royal troops outside prepared to assault the walls. They took possession of the citadel, which was accessible by a postern gate from the fields north of the walls. They occupied the

fortified monastery of St Catherine dominating the town from the east. There was a series of violent skirmishes with the citizens arrayed by the gates. The Archbishop, who was in the Dauphin's entourage, found himself confronted by the canons of his own cathedral in full armour, swords in hand. It took several days of brutal negotiation to induce the citizens to submit. On 29 July the Dauphin entered Rouen as if it was a conquered city, marching through the streets to hear Mass in the cathedral flanked by a congregation of heavily armed soldiers.[78]

By this time the attempt to obstruct the advance of the troops from Burgundy and Savoy had failed. Jean de Torsay reached Saint-Florentin only to find that the citizens had already welcomed the Burgundians into the town, leaving the Armagnac garrison beleaguered in the old citadel of the counts of Champagne. There was an awkward stand-off between the two armies, which was ultimately resolved by putting a neutral captain into the castle while Jean de Torsay marched away to rejoin the Dauphin. This face-saving formula effectively delivered up the crossing of the Armance to the Burgundians, who were able to cross Champagne unhindered. They were supported by a powerful artillery train which blasted away the few attempts at resistance. 'No town can survive more than four or five days in the face of modern artillery,' observed the accounts staff knowingly in a letter to their colleagues in Dijon.[79]

On 29 July, the day that the Dauphin entered Rouen, Troyes, the second city of Champagne, opened its gates to the Duke of Burgundy's officers. Troyes was a populous commercial and industrial centre filled with rich mansions and churches. It had recently received a small Armagnac garrison, but the sympathies of its inhabitants, like those of so many French cities, were overwhelmingly Burgundian. One of the Duchess of Burgundy's captains, Jean de Thoulongeon, entered the southern suburbs with two other captains and a small troop of soldiers. Simon de Bourmont, the long-standing royal *bailli*, came to the barrier outside the gate to speak to them, accompanied by some thirty Armagnac partisans from the garrison. A great crowd of citizens gathered behind them to find out what was happening. There was a long parley. The *bailli* refused to allow the Duke's manifesto to be read out in public and finally closed the gates in their faces. But inside the city Burgundian partisans were gathering their supporters. Within an hour they had taken over the city and opened the gates. The Burgundian captains made their way to the grain market beneath the tower of the church of St John, where John the Fearless's manifesto was read out before a vast crowd cheering and

shouting ‘Noël! Long live the King and the Duke of Burgundy!’ That evening, Simon de Bourmont surrendered the citadel. Within three weeks the example of Troyes had been followed in the two other major cities of Champagne, Châlons and Reims. Both of them threw out the King’s officers and accepted Burgundian captains.[80]

On 30 July 1417, the day after the tumults at Troyes, John the Fearless arrived at Arras. A day’s ride from the city, between Corbie and Amiens, another 5,500 men-at-arms and archers had mustered before the Duke’s marshals. They included not just his own subjects from Artois and Flanders but some 1,300 men raised by retainers and allies in other parts of France. Counting in the contingents then making their way from Champagne, the Duke now had a total of about 11,000 men under arms. It was the largest army that he had ever raised and about twice the combined forces of the Dauphin and the Constable. Across the English Channel, an army of about the same size had gathered by the Solent. The men assigned to sail with the first passage had already embarked. Henry V boarded his flagship, the *Jesus*, and led the armada out into the Channel. France lay defenceless before them.[81]

Notes

1
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 126–8; Schnerb (2005), 623; Chauvelays, 238–44; *Itin. Jean*, 422–3.

2
Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 72–3; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 317, 319–20; *Journ. B. Paris*, 66; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 584; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 126. Paris officers: AN KK 1009, fol. 2; *Lecaron, viii, 271–2; *Journ. B. Paris*, 64. Troops: *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 912; BN Clair. 5, p. 211, 9, p. 553, 23, p. 1695, 25, p. 1799, 32, pp. 2392, 2461, 37, p. 2793, 38, pp. 2841, 2865, 41, p. 3049, 42, p. 3139, 45, pp. 3049, 3359, 50, pp. 3817, 3819, 51, p. 3857, 52, p. 3973, 56, p. 4249, 67, p. 5221, 88, p. 6963, 89, p. 6993, 100, p. 7735, 105, p. 8165; BN PO 1432/Guerre/3, 2194/Pardailhan/8.

3
Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 320–1; BN Clair. 78, p. 6105.

4
Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 322, 323; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 228; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 582–4; *Itin. Jean*, 422. On Pot: Schmedt, 4–6.

5
Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 316–17, 321, 322–3, 326; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 228–9; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 584; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 128; *Itin. Jean*, 422.

6
Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 586–8; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 323; AN P2298, pp. 415–20 (crisis meetings); *Journ. B. Paris*, 66–7; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 257; ‘Geste des nobles’, 157.

7
BN Coll. Bourgogne 65, fol. 104 (‘secret things’); Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 326–7; ‘Chron. Cordeliers’, 231; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 74; *Acta Concilii*, iii, no. 225

(p. 528). Household: Grandeau (1968), 682, 689–90 (fundamental). Neutrality: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 328; BN Coll. Bourgogne 55, fol. 221vo.

8

Chron. R. St-Denis, v, 590; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 325, 329; BN Coll. Doat 212, fols 239–241vo, 243–4 (lieut.-gen.); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 131–2; *Journ. B. Paris*, 67–8, 69; Fenin, *Mém.*, 70–1, 111–12; 'Geste des nobles', 158. Troops: BN Clair. 6, p. 918, 22, p. 1602, 105, pp. 8217, 8219; BN PO 385/du Bois/311. Anjou: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 76–8. Queen: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 322; Kimm, 216.

9

Journ. B. Paris, 66, 67–8; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 227; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 323, 326, 327–8, 332; BN Clair., 6, p. 211 (King's guard).

10

Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 323–6, 328; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 590–2; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 133–4, 148–9; Fenin, *Mém.*, 73–4; *Itin. Jean*, 423–4.

11

Foed., ix, 787; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 750.

12

The best modern accounts are Delaruelle, Labande and Ourliac, chap. VI, and Brandmuller, i, chaps I and II.

13

'Docs. luxembourg.', no. 292; *Teutsche Reichs-Archiv,* vi, 580–2; *Acta Concilii*, i, nos 97–8, 104–5, 107.

14

Reitemeier, 106–8, 120–1, 235–41, 358–61. Klux: *Reichstagsakten*, ix, 504 (Silesian origin); *CPR 1399–1401*, 178, 402; Fahlbusch, 358–70; *Reg. Imp.*, xi. 1, no. 62.

15

Foed., ix, 167–70; Crowder, 100–2.

16

Acta Concilii, i, nos 97–8, 101, 205, 211; *Thes. Nov.*, ii, 1640, 1647, 1656–9; *Frankfurts Reichscorr.*, i, 294, 296; Windecke, *Denkw.*, 87.

17

BN Fr. n.a. 7624, fols 362–364vo (*gabelle*); BN Fr. 25709/733 ('armada'); 'Geste des nobles', 158.

18

Arsenal: BN Fr. 25709/733. Castile: *Daumet (1898), 210–20; BN Lat. 9177, fols 180–1 (embassy); Morosini, *Chron.*, ii, 110–12. Genoa: BN Lat. 5414A, fols 59–61vo (embassy); Stella, *Ann.*, 333; Morosini, ii, 110–12. On Franco-Genoese relations: Bouard, 393–4.

19

Standing army: Durrieu, *Bernard VII* (thesis), 242. *Taille: Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 748–50, vi, 12; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 281; BN Lat. 9177, fols 180–188vo (900,000 *livres tournois* assuming that the assessment of Languedoc, at 150,000 *livres*, was a sixth of the whole); BN Fr. 26041/5050. Pawns: BN Fr. 25709/735; *Collections du Trésor*, 45–6. Mini-*taille*: AN X1a 4794, fols 41, 43vo; *Boislisle, 229–40.

20

Establishment: PRO E36/79, pp. 31–33; E404/31/585; Kirby (1950), 166 (Calais). Workmen: *Foed.*, ix, 327; PRO E36/79, pp. 43–5; E364/57, m. 3d (Janyn); Brown, Colvin et al., 457–8. Administration: PRO C76/98, mm. 5, 4. Colonists: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 296; *Cal. Letter Books I*, 159; Mollat (1952), 22–3. Cost: *Proc. PC*, ii, 185; PRO E36/79, pp. 3–4. *Patis*: PRO E36/79, p.

19. Supplies: *Proc. PC*, ii, 184; PRO E403/622, mm. 1, 3 (4 Oct., 25 Nov.); *CPR 1413–16*, 412, 413, 414; *CPR 1416–22*, 7–8, 8, 11. Raids: Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 684; *Chrons. London*, 123; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 318.

21

Gesta, 114; PRO C76/98, m. 4 (Dorset's presence). Ships, artillery: PRO E101/44/24.

22

Meuillon, *Faits*, 20; *Acta Concilii*, iii, no. 225 (p. 527); Windecke, *Denkw.*, 92; *Gesta*, 116–20; *Chrons. London*, 123; *Cron. Norm.*, 23–4; Strecche, 'Chron.', 156–7; Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 686–8; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 752–60; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 331–2; Raoulet, 'Chron.', 156–7; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 285–6; Cagny, *Chron.*, 103–4; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 74–5. Casualties: compare nominal establishment at PRO E36/79, pp. 31–3 (300 men-at-arms and 900 archers) with E403/624, m. 1 (11 May) (payment for 200 men-at-arms and 600 archers in May). Montivilliers: BN Clair. 39, p. 2889, 41, p. 3046, 67, p. 9193vo, 103/46, 106/73, etc. (from 24 Mar.).

23

PRO E403/624, mm. 3–4 (27 May, 3 June); E101/69/8 (532–50), E101/70/1 (551–69); Curry (2007), 36, 42–51; *Foed.*, ix, 355. News of Genoese: *CPR 1413–19*, 346–7.

24

English fleet: PRO E403/622, m. 13 (18 Mar.); PRO E404/32/12; E403/624, mm. 1, 2 (30 Apr., 11 May); *Foed.*, ix, 344–5; *Proc. PC*, ii, 198, 199. Siege: BN Clair., 46, pp. 3401vo, 3457, 48, p. 9601vo, 92, p. 7140, 97, p. 7577, 112/43, etc. Supplies: *Proc. PC*, ii, 196–7; PRO E403/624, m. 2 (11 May); *CPR 1416–22*, 71; *CCR 1413–19*, 236, 265, 301.

25

Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 329–30; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 744–6; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 241, 244–5; *Journ. B. Paris*, 69 and n^{2}; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 135.

26

Acta Concilii, iii, no. 225 (p. 524); *Foed.*, ix, 441; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 330; Windecke, *Denkw.*, 92; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 746. Sigismund's decision was known in England by 18 Mar.: PRO E403/622, m. 13 (18 Mar.).

27

Queen in Paris: AN KK49, fol. 7vo, 11vo; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 744–8; 'Procès Fusoris', 272. William in Paris: AD Nord B17497, fol. 20vo. His role in England: 'Kanzlei Sigismunds', no. 39 (p. 106); *Groot Charterboek*, iv, 365 ('par l'ordonnance de Monseigneur et de Madame'); AD Nord B17947, fol. 22 (expenses).

28

Reg. Imp., xi, 1, no. 1952a; *Foed.*, ix, 342; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 136. On Regnault: *Fasti*, iii, 200–1.

29

Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 2–8; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 332–3; *Choix de pièces*, i, 384, 393–7; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 139–42, 145; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 286–8; 'Geste des nobles', 159–60; Besse, *Recueil*, 127–8 (Armagnac manifesto, 5 Sept. 1417).

30

Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 2–10; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 332–3; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 248–52, 251–2, 253–4; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 288; *Journ. B. Paris*, 70–3, 74–5, 100–1; 'Geste des nobles', 160; Besse, *Recueil*, 129–31; *Ord.*, x, 360, 361, 372–5, 377–8; *Auctarium Chartul. U. Paris*, iv, no. 2107.

31
Reg. Jurade, ii, 331; *Parl. Rolls*, ix, 135–6 [2]; *Gesta*, 122–6.
32
Parl. Rolls, ix, 135–6, 137, 138 [3, 10, 13]; *Gesta*, 128.
33
Proc. PC, ii, 193–5; *Foed.*, ix, 339; *Gesta*, 128–32; Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 688–70; *Brut*, ii, 380–1. Expenses, gifts: PRO E403/624, m. 4 (3 June); E101/406/26. Quote: *Kingsford (1913), 300.
34
William's arrival: *Groot Charterboek*, iv, 365, 372–3 [4]; *Gesta*, 132; *Chrons. London*, 125; Windecke, *Denkw.*, 68. Banquet: Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, ii, 279–80. Burgundians: *Foed.*, ix, 354, 364; PRO E364/49, m. 2d (Warwick); *Itin. Jean*, 427.
35
Lettres des rois, ii, 262–3; 'Kanzlei Sigismunds', nos 36, 37, 39 (p. 107), 40 (pp. 114–15); *Foed.*, ix, 362–3, 364, 519–20, 787; *Issues Exch.*, 347; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 14–22; 'Geste des nobles', 158, 159. Morgan: *Foed.*, ix, 365–7; PRO E364/55, m. 2d (Morgan), E101/321/35. Henry: *Gesta*, 138; *Chrons. London*, 126. William: *Chrons. London*, 125; *Groot Charterboek*, iv, 375.
36
Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 22–6; 'Kanzlei Sigismunds', no. 37. *Taille*: BN Fr. 20579/46; *Inv. AC Toulouse*, i, 488–9 (AA37/42). Normandy: BN Fr. 26041/5060, 5079, 5094.
37
BN Fr. 26041/5097, Fr. 20615/19; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 12–14; Strecche, 'Chron.', 158–9; *Boke of Noblesse*, 16.
38
Foed., ix, 519, 519–20, 787; *Lettres des rois*, ii, 363; 'Kanzlei Sigismunds', nos 38, 39 (p. 108), 40 (pp. 117–89); *Gesta*, 142; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 26–8.
39
Foed., ix, 371; *Gesta*, 144; Morosini, *Chron.*, ii, 104–6. Troops: 7,300 originally raised (*supra*), less 800 retained to accompany Henry V to Calais: PRO C76/99, m. 17.
40
Morosini, *Chron.*, ii, 102–4, 108–14; Stella, *Ann.*, 333–4; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 36–42; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 333–4, 334; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 76–7; *Gesta*, 146–8; Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 692. Fight with convoy: *Parl. Rolls*, ix, 169–70 [49], 197–8 [26]. Garrisons: BN Fr. 26041/5102, 5110; *Choix de pièces*, ii, 69–70.
41
Commercial truce: AD Nord B564/15320; *Rec. Ord. Pays-Bas*, iii, nos 249–52. Neutrality treaty: AD Nord B564/1532412; BL Add. Chart. 55499 (Henry's confirmation of 16 July 1416); cf. *Foed.*, ix, 383, 451; Baye, *Journ.*, 263–4.
42
Negotiations: *Itin. Jean*, 427; 'Chron. Pays-Bas', 363–4; Livius, *Vita*, 28–9. Jousting, etc.: BN Coll. Bourgogne 57, fols 182, 183; 65, fol. 206vo; 65, fol. 103vo. Preparations: PRO E101/328/6, mm. 5, 6 (18 July, 10 Aug.); *Issues Exch.*, 347, 348; PRO E403/624, mm. 10, 14, 15 (23 July, 10 Aug., 3 Sept.), E403/629, m. 1 (4 Nov.). Raids: Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 265–6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 149–60; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 42–6, 48–50; Jouvenel, *Hist.*,

335.

43

Treaty of Canterbury: *Foed.*, ix, 377–82; 'Röteler Chron.', 164; 'Kanzlei Sigismunds', no. 41; Montreuil, *Opera*, ii, 335, 336, 341–3. Armagnac: see Gerson, *Opera*, v, cols. 674–5 (John the Fearless's letter of 26 Aug. 1416). For his personal position: Valois (1896–1902), iv, 441–2, 443–4.

44

Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 26–8; 'Kanzlei Sigismunds', no. 39 (pp. 107–8); *Foed.*, ix, 374, 377; *Gesta*, 158; *Acta Concilii*, nos 469 (p. 465), 470; *Itin. Jean*, 428.

45

'Röteler Chron.', 164; *Foed.*, ix, 375–6, 385–8; *Gesta*, 156–8; PRO C76/99, m. 17.

46

Gesta, 168–72; *Itin. Jean*, 429.

47

Gesta, 172–4; Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 694; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 163–4. Drafts: *Foed.*, ix, 394–6; PRO E30/1068, 1273, 1609.

48

Parl. Rolls, ix, 177–8, 179–80, 182 [2–3, 9–10, 13]; *Gesta*, 176–80; Walsingham, *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 696; Steel, 154–5; Ormrod (2013), 207–15. Prayers: *Foed.*, ix, 420–1; *Reg. Chichele*, iv, 167–8.

49

Windecke, *Denkw.*, 79–80, 82–3; *Foed.*, ix, 430.

50

Le Quesnoy conference: *Itin. Jean*, 428; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 75–6. Agreement with council: AD Nord B17497, fols 9, 36vo, 37vo; *Lettres hist. Tours*, 4–7; *Caillet (1909 [1]), 300–1.

51

Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 50, 54; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 164–6 (cf. D. of Burgundy's manifesto of Aug. 1417 at ibid., iii, 202–3); *Itin. Jean*, 430; AD Nord B17947, fol. 69vo (Dauphin's planned departure). John V arrived in Paris in October: *Lettres de Jean* V, i, p. cxxii. On William and England: H. E. L. Collins, 166–8.

52

'Geste des nobles', 163; 'Chron. Pays-Bas', 367. Army: BN Clair. 100/35; AD Nord B17947, fol. 26vo. Councillors: BN Coll. Bourgogne 57, fol. 237. Armagnac resistance: BN Coll. Bourgogne 57, fol. 95. St-Quentin: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 166–7; *Handelingen (1405–19)*, no. 700; *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, cols. 1162, 1163; AD Nord B17497, fol. 48.

53

Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 53; *Preuves Bretagne,* ii, 1162; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 276–7; *Auctarium Chartul. U. Paris*, iv, nos 2080–1; Grandeau (1968), 711–13, *727–8; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 167–8; 'Itin. Isabeau', 643. Charles's condition: Guenée (2004), 57–60.

54

Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 52; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 168; Grandeau (1968), 713–18, *728; 'Itin. Isabeau', 644; *Plancher, iii, no. 303; *Particularités curieuses,* 11.

55

Foed., ix, 423–30.

56

Recruitment: PRO E403/629, m. 5 (18 Dec.); *Foed.*, ix, 433–4; *Cal. Letter*

Books I, 175–6. Numbers: Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita,* 92; Livius, *Vita*, 31–3, with the addition of 140 men-at-arms and 420 archers for the retinues of the two northern earls, Westmorland (led by Sir John Neville) and Northumberland, which Livius omits. These show the indented and not the actual service: compare the muster roll at E101/51/2. The latter omits the retinues of the King, Clarence, Talbot and Ferrers of Chartley, but is otherwise broadly consistent with Livius's figures. Indentures: PRO E101/70/1 (573–609). Victuals: *Cal. Letter Books I*, 174. Artillery: *Brut*, ii, 382.

57

English requisitions: PRO E403/629, m. 7 (29 Jan.); *Proc. PC*, ii, 203–4, 213–14. Foreign requisitions: *Cal. S. P. Venice*, i, 58–9; Morosini, *Chron.*, ii, 128–30; PRO E403/629, m. 16 (19 Mar.) (Hansa). Cinque ports: *CCR 1413–19*, 391. Chartering: *Rot. Norm.*, 320–5, 326 (118 ships), plus at least 11 additional ships identifiable from PRO E364/57, mm. 4d (Streller, Potter), 6 (Jacobson); E101/48/15, 21–2, 24, 28–30, E101/49/1–5, 8–9, E101/50/30. Passages: *Foed.*, ix, 466–7; PRO E101/48/12, 13.

58

Proc. PC, ii, 202–3 (erratic categories); PRO E364/54, m. 4 (Catton), E364/59, m. 6 (Catton); E364/61, m. 5 (Soper); *Soper Accounts,* 23, 44–5, 247–52 (analysing the foregoing). Quotation: *Libelle*, 51 (ll. 1018–19).

59

PRO E403/629, m. 15 (17 Mar.); E403/630, mm. 1, 2, 9 (21 Apr., 15 July); *Cal. Signet L.*, no. 805; Steel, 156–8; Harriss (1988), 89–90; *Proc. PC*, ii, 230–2.

60

Livius, *Vita*, 33.

61

'Kanzlei Sigismunds', no. 44; PRO E364/51, mm. 1 (Klux), 3 (Tiptoft), 3d (Morgan); *Reichstagsakten*, vii, no. 227; *Foed.*, ix, 607–8. Dauphiné: Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 26–7; *Ord.*, x, 414.

62

Foed., ix, 434–5; PRO E364/51, mm. 1 (Klux), 3 (Tiptoft); *Acta Concilii*, ii, 93–4; 'Kanzlei Sigismunds', nos 44, 46. Background: Valois (1896–1902), iv, 318–32, 367–79.

63

Beaucourt, i, 15–19; Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 226, 236.

64

Grandeau (1968), 710n[3]; 'Itin. Isabeau', 464–5; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 70. Bosredon: Gonzalez, App., 63–4. Giac: see his later career, BN Coll. Bourgogne 57, fol. 121; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, nos 3621, 3738, 3938, 3951. Graville: Baye, *Journ.*, ii, 225.

65

Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 336; 'Geste des nobles', 163–4; *Journ. B. Paris*, 78; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 175–6, 228–9; 'Itin. Isabeau', 465. Fate of Bosredon: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 72; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 292;

66

*Plancher, iii, no. 303.

67

*Lebeuf (1851–5), iv, 238; Chérest, iii, 281–2; AD Côte d'Or B11895; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 17–18, 30–33; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 78–80; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 175, 183–4; *Inv. AC Amiens*, ii, 24–5; *Huguet, 420; Puiseux (1867), 30; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 336; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 296–8. *Taille*:

'Lettres closes', no. 3; *Caillet (1909 [1]), 301 (Languedoc's share, traditionally a sixth, was 120,000 *livres*: *Dognon (1889), 498).

68

Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 80, 82; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 161, 180–2, 193; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 296–8; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 14–15.

69

Ord., x, 407–9; Dieudonné, 485 (1912), 281; Lafaurie, *Monnaies*, i, no. 382d, e; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 14–17, 25.

70

Council: Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 17–18, 19, 20, 21; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 78. Proclamation: *Inv. Livres Couleur*, no. 1973. Raids: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 181, 183; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 82, 84; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 297; Beauvillé, i, 132 (under wrong date); Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 337.

71

Police: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 84–6; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 336–7; *Journ. B. Paris,* 78; *Commentaires de la Faculté de Médecine de Paris (1395–1516),* ed. E. Wickersheimer (1915), 85, 103. Dauphin: *Ord.*, x, 371–2, 404–5, 409–11, 416–17. Constable: Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 16, 18, 19; Bossuat (1950), 352–3, 354–5; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 234; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, no. 3511.

72

Troops: 'Chron. Cordeliers', 234–5; Fenin, *Mém.*, 75; cf. *Correspondance Dijon*, i, no. 17 (Duchess's muster for Burgundy, 4 June). The date of the muster in Picardy can be inferred from *Itin. Jean*, 434–5. Subsidy: *Handelingen* (1405–19), nos 739–41; AD Nord 6762, fols 1–19. Champdivers mission: *Foed.*, ix, 457, 462; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, no. 3535; *Cotton MS Galba*, 375–9. His retinue in Burgundian army: Chauvelays, 247.

73

Dauphin: Beaucourt, i, 69–71; *Inv. Arch. Poitiers*, no. 903. Loans, taxes: Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 19, 21–2, 24; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 86.

74

Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 25–6; BN Fr. 25709/751 (*gabelle*). Melun: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 72–4; BN Fr. 6747, fols 30, 85, 86.

75

Morosini, *Chron.*, ii, 136–40; Gregory, 'Chron.', 114–15; *Chrons. London*, 71; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 96–8 (wrongly giving command to D. of Clarence); Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 281–2 (same error); Raoulet, 'Chron.', 157–8; *Cron. Norm.*, 27 (confusions with 1416); Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 93–5; *CPR 1416–22*, 142. Stone-throwers: *Doc. Clos des Galées*, no. 1672. Bastard: Anselme, i, 303, vii, 817.

76

BN Fr. 26042/5195. Honfleur: 'Extr. journ. Trésor', nos 539, 541; BN Fr. 26042/5177, 5183, 5186, 5187, 5194, 5200, 5204, 5205, 5214; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 100–2. Rouen: *Chéruel, ii, 14–19, 23–5; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 176–8; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 92; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 77. Other places: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 338; BN Fr. 26042/5195; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 79.

77

Correspondance Dijon, i, no. 17; *Garnier, 48, 72; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 78. Numbers: Chauvelays, 244–7.

78

Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 92–6; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 346–7; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 176–8; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 293–5; Cagny, *Chron.*, 107–9; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 78–9.

79

Itin. Jean, 610; *Plancher, iii, no. 304; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, nos 1991, 2057, 2238, 3630, 3990, 4388; *Garnier, 48.

80

Itin. Jean, 610–12; Desportes, 644–5; 'Lettres closes', no. 6; *Reg. Châlons*, 1–3.

81

Picardy: *Itin. Jean,* 434; Chauvelays, 244–9. Solent: *Chrons. London*, 71. *Jesus*: *Soper Accounts*, 247.

CHAPTER XIII

The Conquest of Normandy, 1417–1418

Henry V's fleet entered the estuary of the Seine in the early hours of 1 August 1417. The English King had originally planned to land at Harfleur and invade Normandy through the Pays de Caux and the Seine valley. In fact the ships made for the mouth of the River Touques on the southern shore. It is unclear when the plan was changed or why. But Henry is known to have been concerned about his army's supplies and this is likely to have been the dominant consideration in his choice of landing place. The Pays de Caux had been fought over for two years and was probably incapable of feeding his army. The rich agricultural regions of Lower Normandy and the Cotentin peninsula, largely untouched by war, were a more inviting prospect.

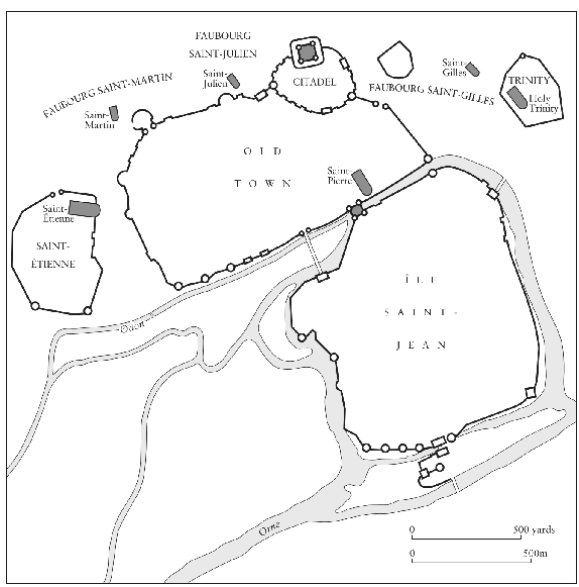
Today the town of Touques is some way inland, overshadowed by the fashionable resorts of Deauville and Trouville. In the fifteenth century it was a prosperous river port joined to the sea by a short stretch of navigable water. It was there that the King disembarked with his companions. Twenty-eight new knights were dubbed at the water's edge, the traditional ritual for young men on the eve of battle. But there was no battle and very little resistance. The coast-guards posted along the shore had vanished. The town had been abandoned by its inhabitants. The population of the surrounding area had fled in terror as if, wrote a contemporary, the English were giants or savage beasts and not men like any others. The only organised body of troops in the vicinity consisted of about a hundred men belonging to the garrison of Bonneville-sur-Touques, an old royal castle dating from the twelfth century which stood on a spur of rock about a mile from the town. Some of these men made a courageous but hopeless attack on the invaders as they began to come ashore. Their leader was almost immediately killed and one of his lieutenants captured. The rest fled. While the laborious business of discharging the ships continued, the English began to penetrate into the region beyond. A large scouting force rode east along the coast towards the port of Honfleur, ten miles away, but found it heavily fortified and defended by a large garrison. The Earl of Huntingdon laid siege to Bonneville-sur-Touques. The Earl of Salisbury was sent to take the smaller castle of Auvillars, eleven

miles south. Neither place resisted for long. At Bonneville-sur-Touques the captain was absent and his deputy submitted as soon as the besiegers brought up their artillery. He promised to open his gates if he was not relieved within six days. The lord of Auvillars agreed to surrender if Bonneville did. About eight other castles, most of them small and ungarrisoned, surrendered over the following days.

The French regarded these surrenders, especially the first, as discreditable. But the truth was that neither fortress had any prospect of being relieved. The Dauphin was fifty miles away at Rouen with the only army in the field. The English army outnumbered his by three or four to one. Hesitant and without military experience, he turned to his council. They told him that the first priority was the defence of Paris against the Duke of Burgundy. So the Dauphin withdrew to join the Constable in the capital. Pierre de Bourbon, a scion of the Bourbon counts of La Marche, was put in command of the citadel of Rouen with a garrison of 400 men. The rest of Normandy was left to be defended by isolated garrisons. Even these were depleted over the following weeks as men were progressively withdrawn to reinforce the garrisons of Paris and its surrounding fortresses.[1]

It was not until 13 August that the English began to move inland. Their immediate objective was Caen, the richest town of Lower Normandy and the main administrative centre of the region. Situated at the confluence of the Orne and the Odon and connected by a broad navigable waterway to the sea, Caen had important agricultural markets, a major river port and an active cloth industry. Its population in 1417 can be estimated at between 6,000 and 7,000, not counting the mass of refugees who had crowded through the gates on the news of the landings. The walls and towers had been rebuilt in the previous century after the capture and sack of the place by Edward III in 1346. But it was a difficult place to defend. Like many French towns it comprised two separate walled enclosures. The old town, dominated from the north by the great keep of its citadel, stood on the north bank of the river Orne. To the south, separated from the old town by a short section of river and a large wedge-shaped meadow, stood the more modern *bourg* of Saint-Jean where most of the population lived, protected by their own walls and entirely enclosed by the bends of the river. The captain of Caen, Guillaume de Montenay, was a local magnate who was close to the Armagnac rulers and had been responsible for organising the maritime blockade of Harfleur in the previous year. He drew pay for a garrison of 400 but in fact had only half that number plus a company of Genoese crossbowmen and an uncertain number of

recruits drawn from the *plat pays* around. It was not nearly enough to defend both walled enclosures even with the support of the citizens. The town was awkwardly situated on low-lying ground, overlooked by the enclosures of two large suburban monasteries each with its own circuit of walls. One was the Benedictine abbey of St-Étienne, known as the Abbaye aux Hommes, on the west side; the other was the womens' convent of the Trinity known as the Abbaye aux Dames, on the east. Montenay did not have the manpower to defend either of them and had ordered both enclosures to be demolished. The great west towers of the Abbaye aux Hommes, which offered an incomparable vantage point to a besieging army, were undermined and made ready for destruction. But Montenay was too late. An advance guard of about 1,000 mounted men commanded by the Duke of Clarence reached the town on 15 August. They occupied the Abbaye aux Dames and seized the unwalled suburbs on the north just as the work of demolition was beginning. The Abbaye aux Hommes was stormed from scaling ladders and captured intact before the defenders could fire their mines.



10 The siege of Caen, 15 August–20 September 1418

On 18 August 1417 Henry V arrived before the walls with the main body of the English army. The defenders rejected the herald's summons to surrender. 'We took not this place from you and will not deliver it to you,' the captain replied in the time-honoured ritual. But the place was already doomed. The English brought their artillery up the River Orne by barges and sited it on the roofs and

walls of the two abbeys, commanding positions from which they were able to hurl their projectiles day and night against the walls and buildings of the beleaguered town. On the north side they were able to come close up to the walls under cover of the suburbs. Several breaches were made. In a short time much of town, which consisted of timber houses, was demolished. The end came swiftly. On 4 September the King's division, which was stationed on the west side of the town, launched an assault on the walls of the old town from the Abbaye aux Hommes. Guillaume de Montenay brought almost all his forces to the walls to fight it off. Then the Duke of Clarence launched a second assault from the Abbaye aux Dames on the east side. They came over the walls in great numbers. They fought their way through the town crying 'A Clarence! A Clarence! Saint George!' and killing everyone they encountered. On the west side of the old town the defenders were still fighting off the assault parties of the King's division. Attacked from front and rear at once, most of them were killed. The rest abandoned their posts and fled. The gates were opened and the English army poured in. Reaching the fortified bridge over the Orne they pushed past the thin defences into the Bourg Saint-Jean. The whole town was given over to murder and pillage. The King ordered that no woman or priest should be harmed. But it is unlikely that anyone was listening. A generation later it was plausibly claimed that between 1,800 and 1,900 of the inhabitants were killed in the sack that followed.[2]

Those who could make it struggled to safety in the citadel with all the valuables that they could carry. At least a thousand people, including soldiers, managed to get in before the drawbridge was raised. The citadel was the strongest part of the defences of the town, a great square keep with four corner towers protected by a curtain wall and ditches which probably dated from the thirteenth century. But it was not designed to withstand artillery. The English hauled their bombards through the streets and shot at the walls at point-blank range. In a short time they had been breached at several points. Guillaume de Montenay succeeded in getting a messenger away with an appeal for help to the Constable in Paris. The Dauphin declared his firm intention of relieving the town. The *arrière-ban* was proclaimed in the King's name on 10 September. Noblemen throughout France were summoned to appear in arms at Étampes in five weeks' time on 15 October. But these were empty gestures. The council did not have until 15 October. On the day that the *arrière-ban* was proclaimed Guillaume de Montenay entered into a conditional agreement to surrender the citadel of Caen. The French government was given ten days, until 19 September, to appear with

an army of relief commanded by the King, the Dauphin or the Constable in person. Failing that the citadel would open its gates on the following morning. A delegation of fourteen men was allowed to leave the citadel to carry these bleak terms to the council in Paris.[3]

*

The Duke of Burgundy had begun his march south on 10 August 1417, shortly after receiving the news of the English landing in Normandy. His officers had already taken possession of the major towns and cities of Picardy: Montreuil, Saint-Riquier, Abbeville, Amiens, Doullens, Corbie. In each place they read out the Duke's manifesto in the market square before enthusiastic crowds. Formal treaties were drawn up and sealed, by which the Duke promised them his protection and the townsmen for their part swore to support his political programme, to supply his army with victuals and to defend their walls against the Armagnac government in Paris. Advancing south at the head of his army John the Fearless encountered little resistance. On 15 August he entered Amiens. There he was confronted by an emissary of the royal council, Aubert de Canny. Aubert was a well-known figure, notorious as a cuckold whose wife had been Louis of Orléans' mistress. Speaking from a prepared text in the presence of the Duke and his leading captains, Aubert commanded him in the King's name to disband his army and return to his domains. The King and the Dauphin, he said, were outraged by John's conduct, which was unfitting for a royal prince and contrary to the terms of the peace of Arras. He and his lieutenants had made open war on the King. They had extracted oaths of allegiance from the King's subjects. They had forbidden the payment of the King's taxes. John might well think that the King was a prisoner of his Armagnac advisers, he added, but that was not a good enough reason to pull down the kingdom at the moment when its entire resources should be directed against the English.

John was by turns blustering and defiant. He told the emissary that he was lucky not to be summarily beheaded for carrying such a message. Then he gave his answer in writing. It consisted in large measure of abuse. Charles VI, he said, was manipulated by low-born parvenus 'unfit for authority, devoid of birth, knowledge, loyalty, experience or any other qualities'. It was laughable to think that such 'filth' could defend the interests of France through the current crisis. He had been forced to take action in the King's true interests. He had not stopped Frenchmen from paying taxes, but had only prevented them from paying the money to base traitors. He had not allied himself with the English, but had taken the field to cleanse the government of those whose incompetence and treachery had let

the English in. He would not disband his army but would persevere until his objects had been achieved. Aubert de Canny's clerk unwisely handed out copies of his master's instructions together with John the Fearless's response. Copies of the response passed rapidly from hand to hand and got back to Paris before Canny did. They created a sensation. In the capital they were the talk of the streets. The council, embarrassed and angry at the way their declaration had backfired, ordered their unfortunate emissary to be imprisoned in the Bastille. On 26 August John the Fearless entered Beauvais, less than fifty miles from the capital. There he was joined by the contingents of Burgundy and Savoy, bringing his army to its full strength for the attack on Paris. From Beauvais John issued a proclamation declaring that the *aides* and all other war taxes apart from the *gabelle du sel* were abolished with effect from 1 October 1417.[4]

The Constable had about 5,000 men under his command including the troops recently recruited by the Dauphin in the Loire valley. Most of them were in Paris. But there were 500 men stationed at Saint-Denis and smaller garrisons holding the line of the Oise at Pontoise, L'Isle-Adam and Beaumont. Another garrison had been stationed at Senlis at the hub of the road system of the northern Île de France. Control of the valley of the Oise was important to both sides. The river was not only the main natural line of defence north of Paris but the only waterway by which the Duke's heavy batteries could readily be moved into the Paris area. Yet the defences of the Oise failed as soon as they were tested. The Burgundian army approached the river in three columns. Jean de Fosseux and Hector de Saveuses reached L'Isle-Adam with the vanguard at about the end of August. L'Isle-Adam was a small town on the Oise with a castle dominating the crossing from an island in the middle of the river. It was commanded by its lord, Jean de Villiers, a chamberlain of Charles VI who had played a prominent part in the defence of Harfleur but whose commitment to the Armagnac cause was regarded as uncertain. He at once declared for the Duke of Burgundy and delivered up the town and the bridge. As a result the Burgundians were able to cross the river and lay siege to Beaumont, four miles upstream. Beaumont was an unwalled town on the south bank of the Oise with an old castle and a large fortified bridge carrying the main road from Paris to Amiens. The bridge was taken by storm, but the castle continued to hold out against overwhelming odds. On 3 September the Duke of Burgundy arrived from Beauvais at the head of his own column. He set up his artillery on the north bank and began to smash the walls. After two days of this the place was indefensible and the garrison surrendered

unconditionally to avoid an assault. Answering Aubert de Canny at Amiens, John the Fearless had described Armagnacs as traitors. He intended to treat them as such. Nine of the garrison's leading members were executed and their headless corpses hung from a tree in front of his tents.[5]

John of Luxembourg had by now reached the Oise at Précy with the third column. They crossed the river in small boats or by wading through the water up to their horses' necks. From here they made for Senlis. Their commander sent a herald ahead to Senlis to call on the town to open its gates. The captain of Senlis was Robert d'Esne, an aggressive Orléanist who had recently been sent there from Paris to organise the defence. He pronounced the town's ancient walls to be indefensible. But he declined to surrender and began to prepare hopeless sorties against the advancing Burgundian column. The townsmen refused to cooperate in this suicidal strategy. They rose up and seized their captain and his garrison, killing nine or ten of them in the process. On the next morning, 9 September, they put them out of the gates and welcomed in the Burgundians.[6]

On 9 September 1417 the Burgundian army laid siege to Pontoise from both sides of the Oise. All resistance outside Paris now collapsed. Faced with the sullen hostility of the townsmen and threatened with the fate of the defenders of Beaumont, the Armagnac garrisons of the Île de France abandoned the fight. At Pontoise, as soon as the Burgundians had set up their artillery in front of the gates the townsmen appeared armed to the teeth before the three Gascon captains charged with their defence and ordered them to sue for terms. At Meulan, ten miles away on the Seine, the important fortified bridge was abandoned by its garrison on the Duke's approach. A group of noblemen from the *plat pays* tried to organise the defence of the town but 200 armed citizens ordered them from the walls, opened the gates and handed them over to the Duke of Burgundy. Mantes and Vernon, which appear to have been ungarrisoned, sent delegations to invite in the Burgundians without even waiting for them to appear. On 14 September John the Fearless crossed the Seine over the bridge of Meulan. Advancing east the Burgundian army reached the bridge of Saint-Cloud on 16 September, where they encountered the first resolute resistance. The great moated keep at the western end of the bridge was filled with troops and stores and armed with artillery. The Burgundians destroyed the timber bridge and battered the walls of the keep, making breaches in the walls big enough for a horse and rider to pass through and filling the interior with dust and rubble. But the defenders refused to surrender and the Burgundians were unable to

pass the moat.[7]

A covering force with an artillery battery was left to contain Saint-Cloud while the main body of the Burgundian army advanced to Montrouge, then a small agricultural village south-west of Paris surrounded by vineyards. There they drew themselves up in battle order across the plateau overlooking the city. The Burgundians remained at Montrouge from 21 September until the end of the month. The old ramparts of Philip Augustus and the walled enclosure of Saint-Germain lay ahead of them, two miles away. They burned the villages around and looted the rural mansions of the Parisians. They sent mounted detachments forward to the gates of the city to test the defences. The walls of Paris were old and weak on the southern side. Parts of the moat were too high to be flooded and a large section was overlooked from the south by the Montagne Sainte-Geneviève. Several large suburbs lay unprotected beyond the gates. The Armagnacs had done what they could to strengthen the defences. The Porte de Buci and the Porte des Cordeliers had been temporarily walled up. The stone bridges over the ditch had been demolished and replaced with drawbridges. In front of the three main openings on the south side, the Porte Saint-Michel, the Porte Saint-Jacques and the Porte Bordelle, the defenders dug trenches and built timber barriers behind which they stationed hundreds of armed men.

The Burgundians hoped to provoke the garrison to come out and fight them. A battle plan was prepared in case they did. It is an interesting document, for it shows that John the Fearless had studied the battle of Agincourt and absorbed its lessons. He proposed to deploy his men-at-arms in three divisions, a vanguard fighting on foot, a larger mounted division and a small rearguard to serve as a reserve. The bowmen were deployed in the English fashion, massed on each wing of the men-at-arms instead of being held uselessly at the rear. The array of men was adapted to the terrain and spaced out to avoid overcrowding on the field. The plan avoided the rigidity of so many French battle plans, with variants foreseen to meet different contingencies. It also addressed the disciplinary problems that had hastened the destruction of the French at Agincourt. The men were ordered to keep to their own unit beneath their own standards. None was to leave the field without leave on pain of death and forfeiture. It was a well-conceived plan. But it was never tested. There was no response from the city.[8]

Inside the city the Armagnac leaders did not dare to move. They trusted no one. They had been forced to allow selected loyal citizens to arm themselves on the walls, which could not have been

defended otherwise. But they were afraid that if the contingents of Paris were allowed to join in an attack on the Burgundian positions they would desert to the enemy, and if they were left behind they would rise and take over the city. When the Constable's Gascon captains were taunted with their failure to challenge the Burgundians they responded with crude candour. 'It is not our job to attack the enemy just to protect a few peasants,' they said, 'We are here to keep the city under control.' The royal council instituted an intrusive system of surveillance. Apart from designated trusties no one was allowed to bear arms, mount the walls or loiter by the gates, or to hold private gatherings or ring church bells at night. Suspected traitors were watched by spies. Informers denounced their neighbours. The night streets echoed to the clatter of mounted patrols. The Provost of the Merchants, traditionally the spokesman for the citizens, was replaced by a chancery official. All government officials suspected of Burgundian sympathies were expelled, including more than twenty judges and officers of the Parlement. Civil servants, prominent citizens, doctors of the university and clergymen were summoned to swear oaths of loyalty. The council hid behind the high rank and growing maturity of the young Dauphin, who became the public face of the government, haranguing leading citizens in the Hôtel de Ville and exhorting the defenders to greater efforts. But behind the bravado there was real fear. As the city was cut off by the Burgundian advance from the north and west the food situation deteriorated and prices began to rise steeply, a potent agent of discontent and sedition. The Burgundian army included many of the exiled Cabochians of 1413 and others with friends and relatives in the city. Messages were constantly being smuggled in encouraging them to revolt. The royal council were well aware of this. Some of the messages were intercepted and read out before them.[9]

The Constable's government was almost completely out of money. The Duke of Burgundy's proclamations against the payment of taxes had been observed almost everywhere. The flow of tax revenues had dried up. A prolix manifesto denouncing the Duke was distributed to the chief towns of the realm, accompanied by desperate pleas to resume the payment of the *aides*. It fell on deaf ears. Most towns stopped collecting the *taille* and many made voluntary grants to John the Fearless instead. The government's main source of revenue was the coinage profit generated by the successive devaluations of the past few months. But as the Duke of Burgundy closed the ring around Paris the mints became increasingly inaccessible. At the onset of autumn the Armagnac government was being funded mainly by the inhabitants of Paris.

The council calculated that they needed a million gold *écus* to defend the realm against the combined assaults of the English and Burgundians. To raise this sum they resorted to a series of short-term expedients. They imposed a supplementary *gabelle* on salt and made the Parisians buy minimum quantities of it. They boosted the profits of the Paris mint, the only one securely under their control, by ordering yet another devaluation of the coinage, the second in a year, which reduced the silver coinage to barely half its original value. They seized part of the treasury of Notre-Dame and forced the chapter to lend them 3,500 francs under threat of losing more. They would have seized the treasuries of other Parisian churches if their officials had not advised them that they would have to break their way in with soldiers. Charles VI in a brief moment of lucidity vetoed this plan. As it was they liquidated the last of the King's treasury of precious objects, including some of the finest treasures from the collection of Jean de Berry, which had been left to him on condition that he would never part with them. The gold and silver was sent to the mint to be coined and the jewels broken off and sold to the highest bidder. The King's most valuable crown, the so-called *'très belle couronne',* was broken into pieces, its gold cusps and precious stones pledged to fourteen different creditors. About 130,000 francs was raised by methods like these. But paying the troops remained a hand-to-mouth business. On 13 September, when the news arrived that John the Fearless had captured the bridge at Meulan, a Parisian banker was woken up at midnight to lend the money urgently needed to stop the garrison of Vincennes from deserting. 'We are overwhelmed by the Duke of Burgundy's offensive,' the council replied when the messengers arrived from Caen with pleas for help, 'We can do nothing for you, carry on as usual.'[10]

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At midday on 20 September 1417 Guillaume de Montenay emerged from the citadel of Caen and delivered up the keys to Henry V in accordance with his engagement. The soldiers of the garrison were allowed to leave with their horses, clothing and personal equipment and up to 2,000 *écus* worth of gold, silver or money. They marched off in a body to reinforce the French garrison of Falaise. As for the citizens, those who wished to stay were required to swear allegiance to the English King, and those who wished to leave were allowed to keep nothing but the clothes that they were wearing. It is not known how many of them chose to stay but at least 700 are known to have accepted safe-conducts to other parts of France. That afternoon the English King, accompanied by his brothers and the

leading noblemen of his army, entered the outer gateway and took possession of the wrecked shell of the citadel.[11]

Henry V now began to organise a permanent administration for his conquests, a task which was to occupy much of his attention over the following months. The critical issue was the invaders' relationship with the indigenous population of Normandy. Henry's ordinances of war, reissued in expanded form before the march on Caen, had contained the usual prohibitions of violence against women, old people and priests and monks and the pillaging of churches, as well as a code of rules governing the treatment of the local population: no unauthorised forays into the country, no taking of food without payment, no burning of buildings and so on. The penalties for breach of the ordinances could be severe. There is some evidence that they were well-observed by the low standards of medieval armies. Laymen are even reported to have gone about with tonsured heads and clerical robes to ensure their safety. But in the longer term military discipline was not enough. The main problems were economic, the consequences of war damage and emigration. Abandoned by its population, Harfleur had become a barracks town largely dependent on England for men, supplies and money. The panic which filled the roads of Lower Normandy with refugees as the English approached in August 1417 threatened to leave large areas of one of France's richest agricultural provinces as desolate as the hinterland of Harfleur or Calais. The destruction of the important port of Caen and the death or emigration of perhaps a quarter of its population was a serious setback for Henry's hopes of making his conquests self-supporting. Medieval rulers may not have been proficient economists, but they were sensitive to consequences like these. Writing to the city of London to report the capture of Caen, the Duke of Clarence reported that 'the most pressing need now is for people to inhabit these places and to guard their walls and citadels'.[12]

Once in possession of Caen the King called a meeting of his councillors and principal captains. He told them that he intended to govern his conquests as their rightful ruler and not as the spoil of victory. If they were to be of any value to him and if other regions were to be encouraged to submit without a fight, the inhabitants would have to be encouraged to remain and be protected from anarchy and war damage. The rudiments of an administration came into being. English *baillis* replaced French ones in the conquered areas. Sir John Popham, the first English *bailli* of Caen, was in many ways typical of the kind of Englishman who made a career in Normandy, an ambitious Hampshire knight still in his early twenties whose family had a distinguished tradition of service to the house of

Lancaster. John Ashton, another Lancastrian stalwart, became seneschal of Bayeux and later *bailli* of the Cotentin. An interim financial administration was set up. Sir John Tiptoft, an outstanding administrator who had transformed the finances of the royal household in England a decade earlier, was appointed Treasurer-General of Normandy and placed in charge of a revived Exchequer of Normandy with a small staff, largely Norman, based at Caen. A silver coinage was minted bearing the legend 'HENRIC. DI. G. FRANCORUM REX'. From the outset every attempt was made to show that the English were there to stay. Henry issued a proclamation inviting all residents of Lower Normandy to swear allegiance to him, in return for which they would be confirmed in possession of their property and protected in their daily occupations. Commissioners were appointed to receive the oaths of the inhabitants and issue them with certificates recording their allegiance. Letters patent were published taking more than 400 Norman parishes under the King's protection. To all, the King promised to abolish the unjust taxes of the past 'such as *gabelles* and the like' and to restore the golden practices which Frenchmen attributed to the thirteenth-century King Louis IX.[13]

The wave of submissions began with the two cathedral towns of Lower Normandy, Lisieux and Bayeux. Both of them opened their gates without a fight in late September. Lisieux was indefensible and had already been abandoned by most of its population. But Bayeux had a royal garrison of 200 men-at-arms and fifty crossbowmen, one of the largest of the region. They appear to have been forced into submission by the inhabitants, like the Armagnac garrisons of Pontoise and Meulan. It is clear that the English King's proclamation was an important factor in both cases. Henry's panegyrists assert that almost the whole population of Lower Normandy regardless of rank came cheerfully before his commissioners to swear allegiance. This is an exaggeration. An important minority preferred to abandon their property and livelihoods. But it is clear that an impressive number of Normans did accept the King's offer, including many who had fled after the landings and some who lived in places that had not yet been conquered. These events provoked some sombre reflections in the chronicler of Saint-Denis. He was angered by the acceptance of the 'odious yoke' of the King of England by so many Normans. But he had no difficulty in understanding their reasons. It was the result of the dissolution of ordinary patterns of loyalty and a profound weariness with politics after a decade of civil war. John the Fearless had many supporters in Normandy, especially among the inhabitants of the towns. As another contemporary put it, 'everyone

had an enemy on two sides'. The sack of Caen, with its heavy loss of life and destruction of property, was a terrible warning of the cost of resistance. And to what end should they resist? To preserve the nominal authority of a mad king and a factional government which was incapable of governing the realm or defending them against invasion? If the English King was the stronger party, the chronicler imagined them saying, then let him govern and allow them to live their lives in peace. Interestingly, he thought that the personality of Henry V himself had much to do with it. Henry came with the reputation of the victor of Agincourt, the foremost warrior of his day. He was a stern disciplinarian. He had 'the bearing of a king, pitiless to rebels but yet just and gentle to his own', wrote the French official historiographer.[14]

Shortage of shipping had forced Henry V to leave part of his army in England to follow the rest in a second passage. At about the end of September 1417 the Earl of March landed at Saint-Vaast-La-Hougue at the tip of the Cotentin peninsula with the remaining troops and joined the King at Caen, bringing the army to its full strength of some 12,000 men. On 1 October the King marched south from Caen up the valley of the Orne and invaded Alençon and Perche which together constituted the appanage of the Duke of Alençon. Possession of them would create a broad belt of English-occupied territory extending from the estuary of the Seine to the march of Brittany, cutting off the Cotentin peninsula from the rest of France. John Duke of Alençon had been killed at Agincourt, leaving a child as his heir. The appanage was defended with masculine determination by his widow Marie de Bretagne, a sister of the Duke of Brittany. Faced with simultaneous threats from both John the Fearless and Henry V Marie had raised between 3,000 and 4,000 men in her own territories and in Brittany, more than the combined strength of all the royal garrisons of Normandy. Alençon, the ducal capital, and Argentan, guarding the valley of the Orne on the northern march of the duchy, both had powerful modern walls defended by garrisons of about 1,100 men each, more than four times the number who had defended Caen. They enjoyed strong support from the inhabitants and from the crowd of refugees who had fled there as the English columns approached. But the defence was unskilfully conducted by local magnates who were terrified of the reputation of Henry V and the example of Caen. As a result all of these places were overrun by the English in less than a fortnight. The captain of Argentan sued for terms as soon as the English arrived outside the gates. A conditional surrender agreement was concluded the next day. The captain of Alençon held out for just a day and a half before making a similar agreement. The cathedral

city of Sées withstood an assault but surrendered as soon as its defenders learned of the submission of Argentan. The powerful garrisons in the ducal castles at Exmes and Fresnay appear to have opened their gates without striking a blow.

By the end of October the whole of the duchy of Alençon was under English control except for Domfront, one of the formidable chain of fortresses built by the twelfth-century kings of England on the Norman march, where a large garrison was still holding out under the command of a bastard of the ducal house. In the meantime detachments from the English army were rapidly overrunning the thinly garrisoned county of Perche. They captured Verneuil, Mortagne, Bellême, Saint-Rémy-du-Val and many smaller places with little or no opposition. Seeing her cause lost Marie de Bretagne and her young son fled, probably to Brittany. Sympathy for her and support for the Armagnac cause ran strong among the subjects of the dukes of Alençon. The English commissioners had more difficulty than usual in persuading them to swear allegiance. A very large number chose to emigrate instead.[15]

The speed with which the mighty duchy of Alençon collapsed shocked the rest of France. Early in November 1417 John Duke of Brittany rode into the town of Alençon with an escort of 400 mounted men to salve what he could of the wreckage. His object was to safeguard his own duchy and the interests of his sister and nephew. He was also intent on defending the neighbouring territories of the house of Anjou in Anjou and Maine, whose fourteen-year-old ruler Louis III of Anjou had recently been betrothed to his daughter. The English King received him in the magnificent castle of the dukes of Alençon overlooking the town on its western side. According to reports reaching Paris Henry V treated his visitor with disdain. When the Duke entered the King's chamber he was left waiting on his knees for an inordinately long time before being invited to rise. After several days of negotiation the two men agreed upon a treaty of neutrality. Henry undertook not to attack any part of John V's domains and John for his part agreed to do nothing to impede Henry's invasion of the rest of France. He promised to close his territories to forces hostile to England and his ports to hostile ships and to forbid his subjects whether in Brittany or outside to fight against the English. A similar agreement was made on behalf of Yolande of Anjou as guardian of Louis III. Charles VI's council received reports of these deals with a resigned weariness. John V's promises substantially corresponded to the policy he had followed for several years. Yolande of Anjou's treaty with the invader was a greater embarrassment because she was the Dauphin's mother-in-law. But the council gave its grudging

consent. It was better than the loss of her territories, which would have installed the English King on both sides of the Loire.[16]

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After eight fruitless days arrayed before the walls of Paris the Burgundian army withdrew from Montrouge in torrential rain on 29 September 1417. Having failed to provoke a rising in the capital John the Fearless determined to starve the Armagnac government into submission. This was to be achieved by planting garrisons at the more important pinch-points of the road and river network leading to Paris. On the eastern side of the city the task was entrusted to the Lorraine captain Carlot de Duilly (who called himself the 'Marshal of Lorraine'). He invaded Champagne and captured Provins, which controlled one of the two main roads into the capital from the south-east. The inhabitants of Provins were prevented from defending it by their wives. They were horrified by the thought of exposing their homes to the risks of a sack and made their menfolk open the gates. At some point after this Carlot moved north and seized the island-fortress of La Ferté-sous-Jouarre on the Marne, a notorious choke-point which was ideally placed to stop the river traffic to Paris from northern Champagne and Lorraine. West of the capital garrisons were put into the principal fortresses of the Seine and the Oise: Poissy, Mantes and Pontoise. Another force of about 1,600 men was placed under the command of Elyon de Jacqueville, the old Cabochian leader of 1413, and sent west into the Beauce, which was the source of most of the city's grain supply. Elyon encountered the same demoralised Armagnac garrisons there as Jean de Thoulongeon had found in Champagne. The great fortress at Étampes, which had been badly damaged in the campaign of 1411, appears to have submitted without a fight. Galardon opened its gates. Chartres surrendered on 14 October after a siege of a few days when the patricians and the lower clergy, supported by the 'commons', took the keys out of the hands of the municipal authorities and opened the gates by force. Evreux followed a little later, bringing the westward advance of the Burgundians to the valley of the Eure. These conquests brought John the Fearless's partisans within reach of the English, then in the process of occupying the neighbouring county of Perche. Each of them eyed the other's movements warily. Henry V sent a herald to the Duke of Burgundy from Alençon, and some weeks later received his chamberlain Guillaume de Champdivers. But the moment was approaching when the two leaders' interests would diverge. The English King put large garrisons into Verneuil and other fortresses on the march of Perche in case the Burgundians should be tempted

to extend their operations further west.[17]

The Duke of Burgundy himself marched on Montlhéry at the beginning of October with the main body of his army. The imposing royal fortress standing over the Orléans road south of Paris entered into a conditional surrender agreement on the day he arrived and opened its gates a week later on 7 October. After this, however, things started to go wrong for the Duke. Bernard of Armagnac began to realise that if he did nothing but hold the walls and streets of Paris the city would starve. So, at the end of September 1417, he embarked on a bolder strategy even if it meant reducing the forces available to hold down Paris. His principal Gascon lieutenant Ramonet de la Guerre recaptured the fortified bridge of Beaumont-sur-Oise and reopened the main road north. The Burgundians were taken by surprise. John the Fearless's governor of Champagne, who blundered into Beaumont a few days later thinking that it was still in friendly hands, found himself arrested and sent off to be beheaded at Les Halles. Early in October the Constable led another column of troops out of the southern gates of Paris in the middle of the night and at the break of day fell on a troop of Burgundians besieging the castle of Orsay west of Montlhéry. They broke up the siege, killing or capturing many of the besiegers.

At the same time the Duke of Burgundy's own operations began to falter. In spite of his appropriation of the royal revenues in the regions he had conquered, he was fast running out of money. He had spent 300,000 *livres* on the campaign to date. Money was draining from his coffers at a rate of about 100,000 *livres* a month. By the beginning of October John was becoming concerned that his troops might desert before he had attained his ends. He was forced to abandon the siege of Saint-Cloud, where the Armagnac garrison was still holding out after being battered for nearly a month by his artillery. On 11 October John led his troops before Corbeil on the Seine, twenty-five miles upstream of Paris. Corbeil was a walled town defended by an immense square keep overlooking the river at its northern end and by a powerful castle controlling access to the bridge from the opposite bank. It was an important river port where the produce of Brie and the Gâtinais was loaded onto barges for the markets of the city. Possession of it was vital if the Armagnacs were to be successfully starved out of the capital. But the siege went badly from the start. The citadel, although ancient, was doughtily defended by the Gascon captain Arnaud-Guilhem de Barbazan. Conditions in the siege lines were terrible. It rained incessantly. The ground was churned up into a sea of mud. The bombards sank into the soft earth and the gunners were unable to aim them properly. Disease spread through the crowded encampment. Crossbowmen

and light artillery pieces mounted on the walls of the fortress fired metal pellets into the ranks of the besiegers, inflicting terrible casualties. The 200-strong garrison was well supplied with food. They had suffered only trivial losses. On 26 October the Duke of Burgundy abandoned the siege, leaving much of his stores and siege train behind him. It was the second time in a month that he had failed before an important fortress.[18]

Sensing that his attempt to force his way into Paris had stalled, John the Fearless resolved upon a stroke which no one had foreseen. He would set up an alternative government under his own control outside Paris. His chosen instrument was the Queen. Isabelle of Bavaria was still confined in the castle at Tours by the Constable's jailers, but under the ordinances she remained in theory the source of the government's legal authority during Charles VI's 'absences'. Her relations with John the Fearless had been difficult ever since the notorious incident twelve years earlier when he had seized the eight-year-old Louis of Guyenne from the hands of her attendants outside Paris. But it had been obvious for some time that John was the only person who could free her from the oppressive tutelage of the Count of Armagnac and his minions. In October 1417 she sent him a message appealing for help. John responded by sending his principal private secretary, Jean de Drosay, to Tours. His mission was to discover whether she was willing to make common cause with him against her husband's government. Jean de Drosay succeeded in penetrating into her apartments in the castle. They reached a preliminary understanding.

On 25 October John the Fearless left Corbeil with a large troop of horsemen and made for Tours. When they reached Vendôme a detachment of 800 men was sent forward through the forest under the command of two of his captains. A messenger was sent to warn the Queen of their coming and to arrange a subterfuge to circumvent her guards. Early on 2 November Isabelle summoned her three principal custodians and told them that she wished to hear Mass at the Benedictine abbey of Marmoutiers in the suburbs of the city. They grudgingly agreed and escorted her there. While she was at Mass the first Burgundian troops reached the city. One of the Duke of Burgundy's officers, Hector de Saveuses, entered the church. She asked him where his men were. On being told that they were outside she ordered him to arrest her custodians. The chief of them, her detested 'keeper' Laurent Dupuis, fled the building and drowned himself in the Loire. The other two were seized, together with several members of their retinue. Towards the end of the morning John the Fearless arrived from Vendôme with the rest of his company. A message was sent into the town in the joint names

of the Queen and the Duke demanding admittance. The Armagnac captain would have refused. But he was overborne by the inhabitants and forced to withdraw to the castle as the gates were opened to the Burgundians. That evening the castle was surrendered to the Duke's officers. John put a garrison of 200 men into it under command of Charles Labbé, a soldier of fortune in his pay. He had now obtained possession not just of the Queen but of one of the major cities of the Loire valley, a region hitherto wholly under Armagnac control. That afternoon Isabelle and the Duke installed themselves in the buildings of St Martin's abbey and negotiated a formal alliance. A proclamation was issued in their joint names, similar to the one which the Duke had had cried in market-places across northern France, commanding the citizens of Tours to pay no more *aides*.[19]

On 8 November 1417 the Duke of Burgundy entered Chartres in pompous state, followed later in the day by the Queen with her modest retinue, four carriages with her ladies of honour and a single knight riding alongside. On 11 November a proclamation was issued in Isabelle's name addressed to the walled towns of France. She reminded them that the King's ordinances conferred the government on her. She denounced the Armagnac councillors gathered round the inert figure of the King. They were 'little men', she said, who had usurped the government and used it to indulge their partisan rancours. They had frustrated her attempts to restore peace to the realm, held the Dauphin captive, excluded her from power and pillaged her assets. Since July, they had withdrawn most of their troops from Normandy and abandoned the province to the English. Isabelle publicly endorsed the Duke of Burgundy's campaign to wrest the government from their hands. She ordered all Frenchmen to ignore the orders of the council in Paris and to give the Duke their unstinting support.

John the Fearless remained at Chartres with the Queen for most of the rest of the month, constructing an alternative government. Eustache de Laitre, who had briefly served as Chancellor of France during the Cabochian revolution, was reappointed to his old office. The discreet go-between Jean de Drosay became the Queen's principal secretary. A new financial administration was set up to take over royal revenues outside Paris, with a treasurer, a receiver-general, a controller and two *généraux des finances.* The dominant figure in the nascent administration was Philippe de Morvilliers, a lawyer from Amiens and a prominent advocate in the Parlement of Paris until he was expelled from the city in 1416 on account of his Burgundian sympathies. Two new superior courts were proposed to supersede the Parlement of Paris, one at Amiens for the northern

provinces under Philippe's presidency, the other at Chartres under Jean Rapiout, another Parisian exile who had once been a chamber president of the Paris court. Isabelle signed her acts 'by the grace of God Queen of France, charged by the irrevocable grant of our lord the King and his great council with the government and administration of this realm during the incapacity of our sovereign lord the King'. One of her first such acts was to grant no less than 200,000 *livres* out of the King's revenues to the Duke of Burgundy.[20]

The royal council was badly wrong-footed by these developments. As soon as the news of the Queen's rescue reached Paris the Constable summoned a great council. The King was brought into the council-chamber to preside in person as all the powers previously conferred on Isabelle of Bavaria were annulled and transferred to the Dauphin. The young prince now became his father's titular lieutenant-general throughout France. But it was far from clear that the government could even hold on to Paris. On 23 November 1417 a plot to seize the Porte Bordelle and admit the Burgundians to the city was discovered only hours before it was due to be put into effect. The Burgundian captain Hector de Saveuses was already waiting near the gate with his men and John the Fearless was standing by at Villeneuve with the rest of his army when the plans were betrayed by one of the ringleaders. As the northern provinces slipped further from their grasp the Armagnac councillors appealed to the nobility and towns of the Midi for money and troops to reduce the rebellious regions to obedience. Nobody stirred. The tax holiday promised by the Duke of Burgundy proved to be too attractive.[21] The Armagnacs were reduced to trying to do a deal with the English. After weeks of desultory exchanges through heralds, Regnault de Chartres left for Normandy at the end of October with Gontier Col and other officials, bearing proposals which have not survived but seem to have represented an advance on earlier French offers.

Arriving at Honfleur, Regnault and his companions found the royal garrison sunk in gloom, uncertain how long they could hold out. On 28 November 1417 they met Henry's councillors in the hall of the manor-house at Barneville in the forest between Honfleur and Touques. Opposite them sat Henry V's steward Sir Walter Hungerford and the disputatious Philip Morgan, still nursing his resentment over the failed conferences at Beauvais. As a result much of the first day was passed in mutual recrimination as each side blamed the other for the failure of the last three years of diplomacy. The French ambassadors were then escorted to Henry V's encampment at Falaise, where the English army had just embarked upon the siege of the largest royal garrison in Lower

Normandy. It must have been a sobering sight. Falaise was the principal French fortress of the Norman march. Perched on a high rock at the western extremity of the town, the great square keep of Henry I of England and the circular tower of Philip Augustus loomed over the lower ward with its regular turrets and fortified gateway. The whole of the English army was deployed across the undulating hillsides around the town, which were already covered in snow. In each sector the men were building winter quarters out of timber, small townships fortified by lines of deep trenches against sorties from the town. Wagon trains with mounted escorts brought in a regular flow of supplies from the quaysides of Caen.

The English King received the ambassadors more graciously than Philip Morgan had done. But it was obvious that there was no scope for agreement. Regnault de Chartres returned to Paris on 21 December to report the failure of his mission. The English King, he reported, was supremely confident. His territorial demands expanded with every new conquest. Interestingly enough, Regnault doubted whether there really was an alliance between Henry V and John the Fearless, as the council had assumed. But it was obvious that Henry was well informed about events around Paris and saw no reason for compromise. 'Seeing the divisions of the country, he thinks that he can take the lot.' The Archbishop had proposed to Henry as he left Falaise that they should meet again in the new year. Henry had agreed, but after considering the ambassador's report the council decided that a further meeting would be pointless.[22]

The English King was anxious to conserve his forces and avoid unnecessary casualties. He made no attempt to assault Falaise. Instead he concentrated on the methodical destruction of the place with his artillery. He began with the lower town, which was built on low-lying ground and more vulnerable than the castle. The English cannon battered the walls and reduced churches, towers and houses to ruins. The defence was commanded by the future Marshal Gilbert de Lafayette and the Dauphinois nobleman Guillaume de Meuillon. Both of them were experienced professional soldiers who had served for years in the Italian campaigns of Jean de Boucicaut. They had some 600 men under their command in addition to the inhabitants, many of whom had previously been at Caen. But with no hope of relief it proved impossible to make them go on fighting. After more than a fortnight of bombardment the town entered into a conditional surrender agreement on 20 December in what was now becoming a standard form. Failing the appearance of an army of relief led by the King, the Dauphin or the Constable in person, the town undertook to surrender on 2 January 1418. The garrison

agreed to submit to the King's mercy. All English prisoners of war were to be released. All weaponry and stores, especially artillery and crossbows, were to be left behind for the incoming garrison. On the appointed day the gates were opened and the besiegers turned their attention to the castle. This was a tougher objective, built on rock which was impervious to mining and too high for the English bombards. A separate garrison had been installed in the castle under the Norman captain Olivier de Mauny. They decided to hold out there for as long as they could.[23]

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On 23 December 1417, as the men of Falaise waited to learn whether they would relieved, the Queen and the Duke of Burgundy arrived at Troyes, which they had chosen as the seat of their new administration. Troyes was further from the front than Chartres, strongly Burgundian in sentiment and enjoyed better communications with the heartlands of the Duke's power in Burgundy and Flanders. The councillors and the leading citizens gathered in front of the gate in torrential rain to welcome them as the bells of all the city's churches pealed out their message of joy. The Queen lodged in the mansion of a rich merchant while her council and administration were installed in the old city in the former palace of the counts of Champagne. Here, on 10 January 1418, Isabelle formally conferred the government of the realm on the Duke of Burgundy. She declared the Count of Armagnac to have been dismissed as Constable of France and replaced him by the Duke's ally Charles Duke of Lorraine. The cumbersome plan to create two new regional courts of appeal was abandoned. Instead the Parlement and all the superior courts of Paris were abolished, together with the judicial offices of the royal household, the Chambre des Comptes and the other financial tribunals of the capital. Their functions were all transferred to new parallel institutions at Troyes. The rudimentary financial departments created at Chartres were reordered and expanded, mainly with officials seconded from the financial offices of the Duke.[24]

Militarily, however, the new government at Troyes was weak. John the Fearless had been forced by financial pressures to disband most of his army. The contingents of Artois and Picardy, constituting about half his strength, had been paid off at the end of November 1417, and the men of Burgundy shortly after the Duke's arrival at Troyes. Only a few selected companies were retained over the winter. The Count of Armagnac seized his opportunity. He collected a force of about 3,000 men from the troops in Paris and Saint-Denis and placed them under the command of Tanneguy du

Châtel and Arnaud-Guilhem de Barbazan. In the course of January 1418 they cleared the Burgundian garrisons from the main routes leading to the capital. The garrison of Étampes was glad to escape with a safe-conduct and their horses, arms and money after the Armagnacs had mined under the walls. Montlhéry was given up for cash after the Armagnacs' Italian crossbowmen had inflicted heavy casualties on the garrison, one of the earliest recorded instances of the use of steel crossbows in France. Jean de Montaigu's exquisite pleasure-palace at Marcoussis was battered by artillery fire as the Burgundians held out for a fortnight amid the ruins. The powerful fortress of Chevreuse, standing on its escarpment 250 feet above the River Yvette, was furiously defended by the largest Burgundian garrison of the region. The place was taken by assault once its walls had been breached by artillery fire and the garrison massacred. These operations reopened the Orléans road and restored the capital's access to much of the granary of the Beauce and the cattle-rearing regions of Maine. On the opposite side of Paris the Armagnacs planted garrisons along all the major road and river routes north and east of the city by the end of January. The Burgundian siege of Paris was broken.[25]

Meanwhile the English were able to advance unhindered in the west. Olivier de Mauny's garrison in the castle of Falaise had reached the limits of its endurance. The English had bridged the dry moat separating the citadel from the town and built shelters at the base of the curtain wall, where they set to work breaking the masonry with pickaxes and club hammers. They eventually succeeded in making a breach forty yards wide. On 1 February 1418 the garrison entered into a surrender agreement in the usual form. They finally opened their gates on the 16th. Like the defenders of the town, the garrison of the castle surrendered unconditionally and, like them, they were admitted to ransom. But only after they had been put to work to repair the walls of the castle which had been damaged by their resistance. Olivier de Mauny was made to pay for materials and additional workmen personally. The submission of Falaise castle after a two-month siege in which the Armagnac government had done nothing to help the beleaguered fortress provoked a fresh rash of defections among the lesser towns and castles of the region. Henry V now resolved to exploit the plummeting morale of the enemy by embarking on the conquest of the rest of Lower Normandy. The King's youngest brother, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, was sent west to invade the Cotentin peninsula, supported by the Earls of March and Huntingdon, a large part of the army and an artillery train. The Duke of Clarence and the Earl of Salisbury were given the task of clearing the remaining

French garrisons of the Touques valley and pushing out the boundaries of the English occupation eastward towards the Seine and the Eure. At the same time the English garrisons of Alençon and Perche were encouraged to test the defences of the Beauce and the Loire valley. In the middle of February 1418 a large English raiding force penetrated across the Beauce to Châteaudun and came within a few miles of Orléans.[26]

In the opening weeks of 1418 Charles VI's Armagnac councillors finally realised that their policy of concentrating the whole of their limited resources against the Duke of Burgundy was taking them down a dead end. It was all very well to clear the supply routes into Paris and hold down the mounting anger of its citizens. These things were hardly worth doing if the price was the destruction of the government's authority in the rest of France. Henry V's conquests were depriving them of some of their richest regions and best military recruiting grounds. Wherever English troops advanced resistance collapsed. Where they had not yet penetrated men turned for protection to the Duke of Burgundy. The failure to confront the invaders was universally laid at the government's door. John the Fearless sedulously exploited the growing contempt for the Constable's government. Regional commissioners were appointed for each region to persuade the inhabitants to transfer their allegiance to the Queen's government.[27]

The first fruits of this policy were harvested in Upper Normandy, an exceptionally sensitive region now in the front line against the English enemy. Most of the higher nobility of Normandy was firmly Armagnac in sympathy while the Burgundians were generally the dominant party in the towns. The Duke's representative here was his councillor Roger de Bréauté, whom he had nominated as governor of Normandy. But the main actor was Roger's nephew, Guy Le Bouteillier, an ambitious but debt-laden nobleman from the Pays de Caux who was nominated as the Queen's 'ambassador, agent and special representative'. Dieppe threw out its royal officials and made him its captain. Caudebec followed suit. The walled town of Gournay on the north-eastern march of the province invited in the Burgundian captain of Beauvais. But the most serious loss was Rouen, the provincial capital and the second city of the kingdom. The Rouennais had never willingly accepted the Armagnac garrison imposed on them by the Dauphin the previous July, and they became increasingly restive after the Queen set up her own government. On top of their long-standing aversion to royal taxation there was now real concern in Rouen that the Paris government was incapable of protecting them against the English. They lived in daily fear of attack, their representatives told Philip of

Charolais. They had no confidence in the King or the Dauphin, having seen how they had 'let down everyone else'.

In the new year the royal council in Paris appointed a lieutenant in Upper Normandy, Robert de Braquemont. Robert was a well-connected professional soldier closely associated with the house of Orléans, who was currently Admiral of France. A native Norman, as a young man he had made a reputation and a fortune in Spain where he had risen to become Admiral of Castile. Braquemont was sent with a body of troops to occupy Rouen and take over the defence of the three Norman *bailliages* north of the Seine and the surviving French enclave at Honfleur. But when he arrived outside Rouen the citizens shut the gates in his face. He proceeded to occupy the fortified monastery of Sainte-Catherine, which dominated the city from the heights east of the walls. The inhabitants, fearing an assault, responded by calling in Guy Le Bouteillier from Dieppe to defend them. He arrived with a troop of Burgundian partisans on 12 January 1418. Guy took possession of the city, and with the assistance of the citizens laid siege to the Breton garrison in the citadel, burning the lower ward of the fortress and battering the walls of the keep with artillery. After five days of this ordeal the captain, Jean de Harcourt, surrendered. Shortly afterwards Robert de Braquemont abandoned Sainte-Catherine to the citizens and withdrew.[28]

The loss of Rouen and much of Upper Normandy to the Duke of Burgundy's partisans provoked a good deal of soul-searching in Paris. At the same time it posed a real dilemma for John the Fearless. It was his officers and not the captains and lieutenants of the Paris government who were now facing the English on the Eure and the lower Seine. They would be expected to defend the local populations against the invader. For the first time, both sides in the French civil war had more to fear from the English than from each other. If they were not to be defeated separately by the King of England they would have to find some way of cooperating. It was the Duke of Burgundy who first suggested negotiations. The proposal was taken up with obvious distaste by the Armagnac councillors in Paris. But with both parties staring into the abyss they had finally reached the point where there was no alternative. Towards the end of January 1418 they agreed to meet somewhere near Montereau, the fortress at the confluence of the Seine and the Yonne south-east of Paris, which was currently held by troops of the Count of Armagnac. Provisional arrangements were made for a combined offensive against the English on the assumption that agreement would be reached. Letters were prepared in the King's name ordering the provincial *baillis* and seneschals throughout

France to summon all fief-holders and four men from every parish. They were ordered to appear at Chartres on 1 May fully armed and equipped to confront the common enemy. These plans assumed that the peace conference would be held in February or March, which would leave just enough time for the troops to leave their homes and appear at the muster on the appointed day and for officials to restart the cumbrous machinery of tax collection to pay their wages. But the timetable shortly began to slip. Much time was lost as the representatives of the parties argued about the format of the conference and the identity of the delegates. The preliminaries were not settled until 27 March 1418. It was agreed that the conference would open in the middle of April in the buildings of a disused Benedictine priory at La Tombe on the banks of the Seine south-east of Paris, half-way between the Armagnac garrison at Montereau and the Burgundian garrison at Bray-sur-Seine. Each side was limited to a retinue of a hundred men without armour, apart from their gauntlets and padded leather habergeons, and with no weapons other than swords and daggers. Georges de la Tremoille, a powerful baron of Poitou who got on equally badly with both sides, was charged with the task of guarding the conference and keeping the peace in the monastery. It proved exceptionally difficult to find a suitable mediator to preside. Ultimately the choice fell on John Duke of Brittany, a loose ally of the Duke of Burgundy but probably as near to a neutral intermediary as could be found among the princes.[29]

In the weeks before the opening of the conference the Armagnacs struggled to improve their bargaining position by consolidating their grip on the Île de France. On 2 February 1418 Charles VI was taken from his quarters in the palace to Saint-Denis to receive the *Oriflamme* from the abbot. On the following day the Constable marched against the Burgundian garrison of Senlis at the head of some 4,000 men, taking with him the King and most of his principal captains.[30] Senlis was a microcosm of the passions dividing France. As the Constable's army approached the urban oligarchy met to decide what to do. The townsmen were strongly Burgundian. But the well-to-do patricians, merchants and lawyers thought it was out of the question to refuse to admit the King in person. They sent a delegation before the King and the Count of Armagnac on the road. They would be able to arrange the surrender of the town, they said, if the Burgundian garrison was offered a safe-conduct to leave and the inhabitants received a collective pardon for having admitted them in the first place. These terms were accepted. But the deal was repudiated by the Burgundian captain of the town, a tough professional soldier called Pierre ('Trulard') de Maucroix. When the

delegation returned he had them arrested and thrown in prison. The mass of the population, supported by the crowd of refugees who had fled there for safety, supported the captain. They took to the streets crying 'Long live the Duke of Burgundy, who has abolished royal taxation and restored our ancient liberties.' When the royal army approached the gates they were received with screams of abuse and a shower of crossbow bolts. The Count of Armagnac sent to Paris for artillery and the army dug itself in for a long siege. The siege of Senlis was to be one of the bitterest of the war. It was an unpropitious background against which to negotiate a peace.[31]

While the French struggled to organise their peace conference the English continued their conquests. In the course of March 1418 the Duke of Gloucester overran the whole of the Cotentin peninsula, encountering only perfunctory resistance. The powerful fortress of Condé-sur-Noireau was taken by assault. The inhabitants of Vire had already resolved to submit weeks before. They opened their gates after a short siege. Torigny surrendered on the Duke's approach. Saint-Lô submitted as soon as the siege operations began. Valognes opened its gates when the English began to undermine the walls. The citadel of Carentan surrendered without striking a blow. Nicholas Paynel, the principal territorial magnate of the Cotentin, abandoned the imposing castle of his family at Bricquebec and shut himself behind the walls of Coutances. But he was forced to surrender it after a few days. The mighty fortress of Saint-Sauveur, which had resisted Bertrand du Guesclin for nearly a year in the 1370s, was surrendered by its professional garrison as it was about to be assaulted.

It was not until mid-March, when Gloucester arrived before Cherbourg, that his progress was checked. Cherbourg was an impressive fortress. The town was protected by modern walls and armed with artillery. All the bridges over the moat had been broken as the English approached. The suburbs had been demolished. The great wedge-shaped citadel of Charles the Bad, erected in the 1360s, dominated the harbour from the eastern end. With its massive keep, its cavernous stores, its curtain wall of sixteen towers, its stone outworks and the broad arm of the sea serving as an unbridgeable moat, the place struck Gloucester's scouts as impregnable. Both town and castle were commanded by Jean ('Piquet') de la Haye. He was not a professional soldier but a Parisian businessman who had made a fortune from the management of the household finances of the royal family, as a result of which he had been a prime target of the Cabochians during the revolution of 1413. But he was evidently a man of strong personality and courage who enjoyed more support among the inhabitants of Cherbourg than the professional captains

appointed to defend other towns. The English tried to approach the walls across the open sand dunes but were driven back by artillery fire. The Duke of Gloucester was obliged to dig his men in for a long siege and summon ships from the Channel Islands to seal off the fortress from the sea. They were destined to remain there for six months.[32]

At the end of March 1418 the Duke of Clarence invaded the *bocage* east of the River Touques, making for the Seine and the Eure. There was scarcely more resistance there than in the Cotentin. The region was largely ungarrisoned and had been abandoned by most of the local nobility. The castle of Harcourt in the Plateau de Neubourg was the cradle of one of the great noble dynasties of Normandy and among the strongest walled places of the region. But the Count of Harcourt was away at Aumale in Upper Normandy defending his domains there against the partisans of the Duke of Burgundy. His castle and treasury at Harcourt had been left to be defended by his wife with the aid of his bailiff and a small garrison of locally recruited men-at-arms and Genoese crossbowmen. They gave up without a fight. The fortified abbey of Bec-Hellouin a few miles north had been deserted by its abbot, who was cowering in Paris and Pontoise. But the prior, supported by a local squire and a mass of desperate refugees held out longer than the professionals at Harcourt. They withstood a siege of a month before surrendering early in May. The garrisons of these places surrendered without even the formality of a period of delay to allow for relief. This traditional device for saving the honour of the captain seemed increasingly pointless after nine months in which the Constable had hardly lifted a finger to defend Normandy against the English. The whole of Lower Normandy was now in English hands except for Cherbourg, Honfleur and Domfront and the districts of Avranches and Pontorson on the march of Brittany. The prospects of these places seemed poor. Honfleur had been cut off by the advance of the Duke of Clarence; a close siege was in progress at Cherbourg; and Domfront was slowly being starved out by the Earl of Warwick.[33]

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The conference at La Tombe finally opened in the middle of April 1418. Regnault de Chartres served as the chief negotiator for the Armagnac government. The Duke of Orléans was represented by his chancellor, Guillaume Cousinot. The Burgundian team was led by Henry de Savoisy, a former councillor of the Parlement who had recently been promoted to the archbishopric of Sens. A committed partisan of the Duke, he was highly obnoxious to the Armagnac

council, which had declined to recognise his election to his see and had excluded him by force from his episcopal city. All the delegations were constantly looking over their shoulders at events elsewhere. The opening sessions were overshadowed by the steady advance of the Duke of Clarence's columns towards the Eure and by dramatic developments at the siege of Senlis.[34]

Senlis had suffered heavy bombardment which had by now destroyed the walls in several places and demolished much of the town including part of the old royal palace. On 12 April 1418, as the conference was opening, the defenders entered into a conditional surrender agreement. They promised that unless they were relieved within a week, by 19 April, they would open their gates to the Count of Armagnac and pay an indemnity of 60,000 francs to repair damage to the town. Both sides were afraid that defeat would lose them face and weaken their hand at La Tombe. The Burgundians, who had been conducting an active campaign of harassment around the Armagnac siege lines, set about organising a relief force before the deadline. The Duke of Burgundy's son Philip Count of Charolais, who was at Arras, called an urgent conference of the towns of the Burgundian allegiance at Amiens to raise funds and men. Military operations were entrusted to the aggressive governor of Artois, Jean de Fosseux, and John of Luxembourg, now widely recognised as the Burgundians' leading captain. They set up their headquarters at Pontoise. Every available man-at-arms was summoned from Artois and Walloon Flanders to join them there.[35]

At La Tombe the obduracy of the negotiators waxed and waned with every snippet of news to arrive from the front. The opening proposals disclosed little room for compromise. Apart from the usual plans for a general amnesty and a mutual restitution of confiscated property, which had been features of every peace since 1409, the Duke of Burgundy's representatives had three central demands: first, the Duke was to be free to enter Paris with whatever force he chose and to have unrestricted access to the King and the Dauphin; secondly, all the constitutional powers claimed by the Queen were to be recognised; and thirdly, all public offices were to be at her disposal. The Armagnacs' opening bid consisted essentially of a return to the status quo at the time of the confirmation of the peace of Arras: John the Fearless was to surrender all the towns occupied by his partisans in northern France and withdraw his garrisons; his 'novelties', by which they meant the measures taken in the Queen's name since November 1417, were to be annulled at the discretion of the Parlement; he was to sign a written renunciation of his alliances with Henry V and the Emperor Sigismund, to abstain from all acts of war against the King's

government and to join forces with the royal army against the English. These claims were little more than mutual calls for unconditional surrender. But the Armagnacs were in no position to insist. They were desperate for a deal and had already resolved to concede much of what John the Fearless was demanding. They were willing to allow access for the Queen and the Duke of Burgundy to the Dauphin. They were still resisting John the Fearless's demand that all appointments should be put in the hands of the Queen, but had privately decided to concede even that if they had to. The one immovable sticking-point was the Burgundian demand to be allowed into Paris with unlimited force. That, as one of the Armagnac councillors told the ambassadors of the Duke of Savoy, would have enabled him to tear up any agreement, seize the Dauphin and dictate his own terms. The most that they would allow was that John the Fearless could bring in an enlarged bodyguard of four or five hundred men, with perhaps more to follow later if things went according to plan.[36]

On 19 April 1418, the day appointed for the surrender of Senlis, two Burgundian columns were approaching the town to raise the siege. One, under John of Luxembourg, had left Pontoise two days before. The other, approaching from the east, comprised the companies of Carlot de Duilly from Champagne. But when the sun rose neither force had arrived within sight of the town. The Count of Armagnac called on the garrison to surrender according to their engagement. They replied that the appointed hour had not yet arrived and claimed to have been relieved. The Count would have none of this. When the garrison remained obdurate, he brought out four of the six hostages delivered at the time of the conditional surrender agreement and, brushing aside the protests of his captains, he had them beheaded and dismembered in front of the town gates and their body parts hung from improvised gibbets around the walls. The defenders retaliated by taking sixteen Armagnac prisoners onto the walls and butchering them in full view of the besiegers. It was clear that to take Senlis the Armagnacs would have to defeat the approaching Burgundian columns. The Constable tried to confront them separately before they could join forces. He marched his troops west through the forest of Chantilly towards John of Luxembourg and drew them up in battle order across the road. The two armies came within a few hundred yards and glared at each other for six hours. As night fell news reached the Count of Armagnac that a sortie from Senlis had invaded his camp, captured his baggage and destroyed much of his siege equipment. This was followed by reports that Carlot de Duilly was only a few miles away. Threatened with attack from front and rear

at once, Armagnac was forced to abandon the siege. He withdrew in fury to Paris. The whole operation had cost him much prestige, heavy casualties and more than 200,000 francs.[37]

When he reached the capital Bernard of Armagnac was confronted by a fresh crisis. The conference at La Tombe had been adjourned for each side to consult their principals. With all France waiting on the outcome of the negotiations, recruitment for the great national army which was to meet on 1 May had come to a halt. The government's coffers were empty. Its credit was exhausted. The mint was out of bullion. Threatened with the desertion of his troops, Bernard of Armagnac began to plunder the treasuries of the Parisian churches, the step that he had been prevented from taking the previous autumn. His officers entered the monastery of Saint-Denis and forced the monks to surrender the gold shrine of St Louis. When the weight of gold fell short of expectations they came back to strip some of the jewels from the shrine of St Denis and the votive lamps around it. Similar outrages no doubt occurred at other Parisian churches. The alleys and tenements, sensing that the Count of Armagnac's regime was in its death-throes, were beginning to stir. The Count's soldiers, conscious of the mounting hostility around them, responded with redoubled patrols and growing brutality.[38]

In the citadel of Caen the English were celebrating St George's Day (23 April) with jousts and banquets and the creation of new knights. After the festivities the captains of the army gathered in the King's presence to plan the next stage of the conquest. They agreed that the objective should be Rouen, politically and strategically the main prize. The intention was to advance east and establish a firm line of defence on the Eure before forcing a crossing of the Seine at Pont-de-l'Arche. Henry had already summoned every available man to his standard. Thomas Beaufort Duke of Exeter had recently arrived from England with more than 2,000 reinforcements. With this addition to his strength the English King must have had between 8,000 and 10,000 men to put into the field when allowance is made for casualties, desertions, garrison service and men leaving at the end of their indentures. At the end of April the army began to advance east towards the valley of the Eure under the command of the Duke of Exeter. The pattern established in other parts of Lower Normandy was repeated. There was practically no resistance anywhere. Within days of the start of the offensive the cathedral city of Evreux had surrendered without even the formality of a delay to allow for relief.[39]

The conference at La Tombe reopened at the beginning of May 1418 as the English were approaching Evreux. The talks had

assumed a fresh urgency, partly as a result of the daily reports of fresh disasters on the Norman front, and partly because of a new factor in the complex diplomatic mosaic, the intervention of the papacy. In November 1417 an enlarged conclave, meeting at Constance, had managed to secure the agreement of all the main national groups to the election of a new Pope, the first holder of the office since 1378 to be acknowledged by the whole Latin Church. Oddone Colonna, an Italian from a famous Roman family, took the name Martin V. So far as is known he had no preconceptions about the conflict of Burgundy and Armagnac or the wars of England and France and little knowledge of either. But one of his first acts was to resume the role of peacemaker which had been fulfilled by the French Popes sitting at Avignon before the schism. In March 1418 he appointed two cardinals as his legates in France. Giordano Orsini cardinal of Albano, a Roman like the Pope himself, was reputed a friend of England and had defended the interests of the Duke of Burgundy at the Council of Constance. He was expected to take the lead in the negotiations with Henry V. His colleague, Guillaume Fillastre cardinal of St Mark, was a diplomat of outstanding ability who had also been at Constance, where he had taken an active part in countering the manoeuvres of both the English and the Burgundians. He was a patriotic Frenchman who did not care for the English ('an acrimonious race'). John the Fearless regarded him, with good reason, as his enemy. They were joined in their mission by two men who had served as the agents of the Duke of Albany at Constance, his Dominican confessor Finlay (who called himself Finlay Albany), and the Anglo-Welsh adventurer Griffin Young, who had recently managed to procure his nomination by the Pope to the Scottish diocese of Ross. Their main function in the Pope's eyes was to persuade the Scots to abandon Benedict XIII and accept the decrees of the Council. But they were also expected to bring Scotland into the negotiations for a general peace between England and France.[40]

By the time the conference reopened the two legates had already had long interviews with the Duke of Burgundy at Dijon and the Queen and her advisers at Troyes. Fillastre had then made for Paris where he appeared before a great council of the Armagnac party. On 13 May he arrived at La Tombe. After ten days of preaching, bargaining and cajoling, the two legates secured agreement in principle to terms which the rival delegations agreed to recommend to their respective principals. These terms were essentially a temporary patch. They deftly avoided or deferred all of the more contentious issues. There was to be a general amnesty and a mutual restitution of confiscated property. The Duke of Burgundy was to be

allowed access to the King but only under carefully controlled conditions at a ‘convention’ to be held at Melun. The agreed arrangements for the convention spoke volumes about the parties’ mutual distrust. Each clearly believed that the other was bent on taking control of the royal family by force. The King and the Dauphin and their Armagnac ministers were to be protected at Melun by up to 300 men-at-arms and the Queen and John the Fearless by the same number. A ‘neutral’ corps of 400 men-at-arms jointly commanded by a nominee of each side was to be on hand to prevent a coup by either group. The difficult questions of future access to the King, appointments to public offices and the validity of the Queen’s acts since her release from imprisonment at Tours were all to be resolved by the King on the advice of the Queen, the Dauphin, the Duke of Burgundy and the royal princes and councillors, apparently at the convention. Meanwhile the Duke was expected to conduct himself as a loyal vassal of the Crown, but exactly what this involved was not specified. There was no firm undertaking that John the Fearless would join forces with the Armagnacs against the English.[41]

The Duke and the Queen both ratified these proposals in the next few days. But although the terms decided hardly anything they provoked a split in the Armagnac ranks. Most of the royal council was in favour. The Bishop of Paris, Gérard de Montaigu, emerged as their leader. The Dauphin was won over. The formal consent of the King was arranged. But the Count of Armagnac and Tanneguy du Châtel rejected the proposals out of hand. Their view seems to have been that as soon as the Duke and the Queen were allowed access to the King and the Dauphin, even in the highly controlled atmosphere of the proposed ‘convention’, their cause would be lost. This must have been the view of John the Fearless as well, or he would hardly have ratified the terms. The Count of Armagnac’s objections were supported by the leading Armagnac captains and some of the officers of state. The Chancellor, Henri de Marle, declared that he would never seal the treaty. If the King really thought well of it, he could apply the great seal to it himself. Gérard de Montaigu and his allies were determined to circumvent the objectors. They persuaded the Dauphin to summon a great council to outflank the objectors and approve the terms. The assembly, comprising all the noblemen in Paris and substantial numbers of clergy, officials and prominent citizens, met in the Louvre on 26 May. Realising that he had lost the argument Bernard of Armagnac denounced those who attended as traitors and declined to attend. The assembly brushed his objections aside and agreed, apparently by a large majority, to endorse the legate’s terms. They were published from the steps of the Châtelet

on 27 May to the usual sound of clanging bells and street parties. But the result was a stalemate. The document could not be sealed. The Count of Armagnac ignored it. His garrison of Gascons and Bretons continued to take their orders from him. This was the situation at the end of May 1418 when a violent uprising in Paris set all the peacemakers' work at naught.[42]

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The Porte de Buci, sometimes known as the Porte Saint-Germain, was a fortified gate in the old wall of Philip Augustus protected by a drawbridge and flanked by two massive towers. It stood in what is now the *6e arrondissement* of Paris, where the Rue Saint-André-des-Arts meets the Rue Dauphine. In 1418, the opening gave onto a large open space where the nearby abbey of Saint-Germain-des-Prés marked its title with a tollbooth and a pillory. At about two o'clock in the morning of 29 May the drawbridge was lowered and the gate opened by the keepers on watch to admit several hundred troops commanded by the Burgundian captain of Pontoise, Jean de Villiers of L'Isle-Adam. He had plotted the coup for several days with a group of his friends and kinsmen inside the city. They found plenty of recruits among the Parisians, exasperated by the obduracy of the Count of Armagnac and the behaviour of his troops. The collapse of the negotiations at La Tombe presaged another round of seizures, special taxes and forced loans. The richer citizens and the clergy, who had kept their heads down for years for fear of another Cabochian revolution, had begun to feel that the government of the Count of Armagnac was even worse. The conspirators made contact with Perrinet le Clerc, a young man who had recently been beaten up in the street by the outriders of an Armagnac councillor. His father, a rich iron merchant with premises on the Petit Pont-Neuf, was the keeper of the Porte Saint-Germain and the local *quartenier* or captain of the watch. Perrinet and half a dozen companions secretly visited Jean de Villiers at Pontoise. He offered to steal his father's keys and open the gate. Jean de Villiers had a large company of men in garrison at Pontoise. He recruited two other captains from the Burgundian garrisons of the Seine to swell their numbers, Clause de Beauvoir lord of Chastellux and Guy ('Le Veau') de Bar. They fixed upon the night of 28–29 May, when Perrinet and his friends would be doing watch duty at the gate.[43]

Once inside the walls, the Burgundian troops made their way swiftly through the silent streets of the left bank and crossed the Île de la Cité to the open space by the Châtelet where hundreds of armed Parisians were waiting for them. They divided into several groups and spread through the city shouting 'To arms!' 'Burgundy

and peace!' and 'Long live the King and Duke of Burgundy!' Across the city thousands rose from their beds and emerged into the streets wearing St Andrew's crosses over ancient cuirasses and carrying rusty swords or crude wooden clubs. The garrison of Paris appear to have been dispersed in their lodgings and unable to concentrate in time to stop them. The Burgundian leaders made straight for the Hôtel Saint-Pol, accompanied by a troop of professional soldiers and a noisy crowd of citizens. The King was hastily dressed by his attendants and brought into one of the audience chambers to receive them. He had little notion of what was going on. Learning that they had come on behalf of the Duke of Burgundy the King enquired with vacant geniality after the health of his cousin of Burgundy and asked why he had been so tardy in coming to see him. However, in the confusion the Burgundians failed to secure possession of the Dauphin. This was a fatal mistake. With Charles VI now no more than a mask of kingship the young prince represented the future and the Armagnacs' only prospect of political survival. The Dauphin was lodged close by in the mansion in the Rue de Pute-y-Musse. Tanneguy du Châtel, the sole Armagnac leader to retain his presence of mind, raced to the building. Seizing the half-naked boy from his bed he covered him with a sheet and carried him unnoticed out of the back of the house and through the palace gardens. The little group made their way out into the streets and reached the Bastille. From there Tanneguy sent a messenger to the captain of Saint-Denis with orders to come urgently with all his men.

It was too late. By the time the soldiers arrived the citizens were in possession of the streets. Most of the population of Paris, including women and children, priests and monks, was awake and milling through the city. Over the next few hours groups of armed men made for the mansions of the leading Armagnac captains, councillors and officials. The Bishop of Paris Gérard de Montaigu was spared because he had been the most vocal supporter of the draft peace treaty. He managed to extricate Regnault de Chartres and Cardinal Fillastre from the hands of the mob by pointing out that they too had been in favour. But the mob broke into the house of the Chancellor Henri de Marle and arrested him. Ramonet de la Guerre, the Viscount of Narbonne, the Archbishop of Tours, the Abbot of Saint-Denis and five bishops were all seized in their houses and carried off to the city's prisons. The College of Navarre, the training ground of so many Orléanist supporters in the administration, was sacked by the mob and most of its students escorted to the prisons. They were joined there by prominent members of the University who had made a name for themselves by

preaching against the Duke of Burgundy or Jean Petit. Jean de Villiers burst into the bedroom of the Duke of Bourbon's seventeen-year-old son Charles in the Hôtel de Bourbon and demanded to know to which party he wished to belong. The young man had the wit to reply that he would support the same party as the King and was led off to safety at the Hôtel Saint-Pol. Others managed to escape out of the city before the mob came for them. Jean Jouvenel, who as President of the Cour des Aides was a prime target, was tipped off by a Burgundian friend. He found a boat to take him to the suburban abbey of St Victor just as the riots were beginning and then trudged twenty miles to Corbeil.

Shortly the frenzy died down. The looting was stopped. An orderly house-to-house search was organised to root out prominent Armagnacs who were still at large. The chief of these was the Count of Armagnac himself. His mansion on the Rue Saint-Honoré north of the Louvre had been among the first to be invaded by the mob. But he had managed to escape in disguise as the crowd rampaged through his rooms. He took refuge in the nearby house of a mason. He promise the mason all the money he could desire if he would save him. The man hid him in his cellar. Then, frightened of the revenge of the mob, he betrayed him to Jean de Villiers. They found Bernard concealed in a cavity in the masonry, wearing a filthy tunic and a bedraggled St Andrew's cross. He was trussed up, laid across the rump of Guy de Bar's horse and taken under guard to the Petit Châtelet, pursued by a furious mob baying for his blood.[44]

From behind the walls of the Bastille Tanneguy du Châtel and the Dauphin could hear the roaring of the mob across the capital and after that the raucous street parties, chanting processions and bell-ringing with which the Parisians celebrated the downfall of the Constable's government. With them were a handful of Armagnac ministers and officials, the small permanent garrison of the fortress and about 300 men of the garrison of Saint-Denis. Tanneguy's main priority was to avoid being blockaded in the fortress and having the Dauphin prised from his hands. So, towards midday on 29 May, he left the Bastille with the Dauphin by the gate on the country side, together with most of the troops, and withdrew to the fortified bridge at Charenton south of Vincennes. From here he sent detachments of men to secure the main Armagnac garrison-towns of the region at Meaux, Corbeil and Melun. The Dauphin was packed off under escort to Melun, which was the strongest of the three. Tanneguy himself remained at Charenton where he was shortly joined by the Marshal, Pierre de Rieux. He brought with him with some 700 men who had been operating against the Burgundian garrisons of the Marne valley. In all Tanneguy and Pierre de Rieux

now had about 1,000 soldiers at their disposal. Together the two captains devised a plan to reoccupy Paris by force.

It was a 'desperate scheme' according to an Aragonese mercenary who was with them and later recorded these events for the benefit of the King of Aragon. On the night of 31 May Pierre de Rieux was to take 300 of his men on foot under cover of darkness through the forest of Vincennes to reinforce the small garrison holding the Bastille. On the following day at dawn these men were to sortie by the gate on the city side, capture the adjacent Porte Saint-Antoine and admit another 400 men who would be waiting outside under Tanneguy himself. The rest of the troops were left to hold the bridge at Charenton and secure their line of retreat. The opening stages went exactly according to plan. The Porte Saint-Antoine was successfully captured and the drawbridge lowered to admit the men waiting outside. Thereafter things began to go wrong. The citizens had anticipated an attempt to re-enter the city through the Bastille. They had removed the King from the Hôtel Saint-Pol, parading the insensible monarch through the streets to the Louvre. In the Rue Saint-Antoine a succession of manned barricades had been erected across the street. The nearest of these was destroyed by artillery fire from the high walls of the Bastille. The Armagnacs then began to advance along the street with banners flying shouting 'Long live the King and the Constable of Armagnac!' They seized the next barricade and slaughtered its defenders. The next one after that was promptly abandoned. The soldiers advanced towards the centre of the city. But it was notoriously difficult to fight through the dense streets of medieval cities. The invaders managed to force their way as far as the Porte Baudoyer, a redundant gateway in the old eleventh-century wall at the point where the Rue François-Miron now meets the Rue du Pont-Louis-Philippe. Here they were confronted by the Paris watch, supported by the Burgundian men-at-arms and a great crowd of citizens. Crammed between the lines of houses, the invaders were unable to deploy more than a fraction of their strength. There was a brief battle. The Armagnac force was pushed back and retreated in disorder towards the Bastille. By the time that they reached the fortress they had lost nearly half their number. The survivors escaped into the fields and fled back to Charenton. When the news of Tanneguy's failure reached Melun the Dauphin was hurriedly taken from the castle and escorted south to Bourges. Shortly afterwards, on 4 June, the Armagnac captains abandoned the fortified bridge at Charenton and withdrew all their remaining troops from Paris including the garrisons of the Bastille and Saint-Cloud. Tanneguy du Châtel and his companions found their way to Melun. There, over dinner in the fortress they lamented

the fickleness of fortune. They had earned good money and lived well in the service of the Count of Armagnac. But, emptying out their purses, they found that they had only six silver *blancs* between them.[45]

The original Burgundian coup had been almost bloodless. Two or three Armagnacs who had shouted out party slogans in the streets on that first night had been lynched. Another was hanged by the rioters from the window of his house opposite the Bastille. About ten more lost their lives on the following day. But the mood darkened after Tanneguy du Châtel's failed attempt to reoccupy the city. Most of the Armagnacs captured in the battles at the Bastille and the Porte Baudoyer were butchered before they could be got to the prisons. More that 500 suspected Armagnacs were pulled out of their houses and murdered during the riots which followed. Shortly the anger of the mob turned against the prisoners crammed into the various jails of Paris. There were widespread fears of another attempted *coup de main* by the Armagnacs, supported by a mass break-out from the prisons. Cries went up for them all to be transferred to the Châtelet and the Petit Châtelet. The cries mingled with vocal demands for vengeance after the oppressions of the past five years. Some of the more important Armagnac prisoners, including the Count of Armagnac and Henri de Marle, were taken for their own safety to the Conciergerie.[46] Others who were still at large surrendered voluntarily at the Châtelet, believing that they would be safer there.

They were tragically mistaken. Two hours before dawn on 12 June 1418 a rumour spread through Paris that an Armagnac army had arrived outside the Porte Bordelle in the University quarter. The alarm went up across the city. The watch rushed for the gate and manned the walls. Behind their backs the streets filled with angry citizens armed with mallets, axes and sticks. Leaders quickly emerged: a tin worker and several butchers. They demanded the blood of the Armagnac prisoners. Why let them survive and take their revenge at the next turn in their political fortunes? Some of them added a demand for the heads of 'foreigners', by which they meant the Bretons, Gascons Italians and Spaniards who had served in the Constable's garrison. Some Genoese crossbowmen were pulled out of their billets and lynched. The Italian quarter, which was inhabited mainly by merchants and craftsmen, was sacked. When the sun rose on the following day thugs from the surrounding region had begun to pour into the city to join in. The whole day was given over to rioting and looting. Guy de Bar and Jean de Villiers tried to calm them down. Their voices were drowned by the howls of the mob.

At about eight o'clock, in the fading evening light, the crowd attacked the royal Palace on the Cité. They broke down the gate and invaded the Conciergerie, where they found the Count of Armagnac, Henri de Marle and other prominent Armagnac prisoners. They were hustled out into the courtyard and battered to death on the ground along with the other prisoners found with them. Bernard of Armagnac's body was stripped and his armorial saltire was carved into his flesh with a knife. Then they dragged his corpse to the marble steps of the Palace's main court. A short distance from the Palace, buried in the maze of narrow lanes of the Cité, stood the Benedictine priory of St Eloy, one of a number of monastic churches in Paris exercising criminal jurisdiction in the city. The prior's prison was notoriously insecure and the crowd forced their way in without difficulty. They killed all the prisoners they found with axes, except for the aged Abbot of Saint-Denis who fled into the church and sprawled in front of the high altar. He was rescued from there by Jean de Villiers.

The next target was the Petit Châtelet, the small fort at the southern end of the Petit Pont. This housed most of the senior churchmen arrested on 29 May and several prominent members of the University. The guards prevented the mob from breaking in but they allowed in a small group to deal with the prisoners. They stood complacently by as each prisoner was called up by name and thrust out of the gate to be hacked to death with swords and axes and thrown into the Seine. Jean de Marle Bishop of Coutances, who was Henri de Marle's son, vainly proferred the gold trinkets he had with him to save his life. They took them and killed him anyway. Turning about, the crowd pushed their way across the bridge to the Grand Châtelet on the right bank which contained the largest number of prisoners. The officers and sergeants of the Châtelet armed the prisoners and together they fought off the mob for two hours until most of them had been killed. The Parisians poured into the building. The prisoners' cells were arranged around the upper galleries of the courtyard. The occupants were seized and thrown head first into the courtyard and then finished off where they fell with swords and sharpened stakes. The same scenes of mass murder were repeated at the prisons of the Bishop of Paris, the Temple and the monastic houses of St Martin and St Magloire. Some of the prisoners tried to hide in the unlit dungeons and ditches of their prisons. They were dragged out and despatched.

When the killing eventually stopped, at about ten o'clock on the following morning, only about 200 or 300 political prisoners had survived. The most plausible estimates put the number of dead at well over 1,000, perhaps as many as 2,000. They included, in

addition to a Constable and a Chancellor of France, several prominent Armagnac captains, four bishops, senior officers of the administration, the old diplomatic secretary Gontier Col and some notable members of the University including Benoit Gentien, one of the prosecutors of Jean Petit, and the patriotic propagandist Jean de Montreuil. The killers had been indiscriminate. The dead included not only Armagnacs but the usual occupants of Parisian jails: petty criminals, debtors, victims of malicious denunciations, some women and children. A few were even supporters of the Duke of Burgundy. The corpses lay in piles in the streets and the strands of the river. Most were loaded into carts to be buried in the cemeteries of the city before they decomposed in the summer heat. But no one dared to offer a decent burial to the more notorious victims. They were carried to the Palace courtyard on the Cité and displayed on the marble steps along with the Count of Armagnac and Henri de Marle. Eventually, they were tied together by the feet and dragged round the city behind a horse, before being cast onto a dungheap outside the Porte Saint-Martin.[47]

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The massacres changed everything. They horrified even an age inured to political violence. It was not just the frenzied hatred which had animated the mobs or the sheer numbers of the dead, but the low status of the killers and the exalted position of many of the victims. Even more than the commune of Étienne Marcel or the Peasants' Revolt in England in the previous century, which had hitherto stood as the emblematic extremes of proletarian violence, the Parisian massacres profoundly disturbed the social and political sensibilities of a hierarchical age. They aroused the fear of popular revolution which was never far below the surface of medieval public life. Some of those who were with the Dauphin at Bourges believed that John the Fearless had personally encouraged the mob. This was certainly untrue. He had not been in Paris at the time and his officers on the spot had done what little they could to prevent the slaughter. But the massacres were carried out by his partisans and, coming after the excesses of the Cabochian revolution of 1413, his reputation was inevitably blackened by the association.

For a time after the Dauphin's flight from Paris men on both sides of the party divide tried to pretend that the negotiations of La Tombe could be resumed. The Dauphin received Cardinal Fillastre at the bridge of Charenton on 1 June and encouraged him to pursue his work as mediator. The King's council in Paris, now dominated by Burgundian captains, resolved to send a delegation to the prince to press him to return to the city and unite the kingdom against the

English. Fillastre, who was present at the council, agreed to lead the delegation. By this time the Dauphin was on his way to Bourges. But, according to the agent of the city of Lyon, who met him there a few days later, he still expected to negotiate some kind of accommodation with the Burgundians. When Fillastre eventually reached Bourges in the middle of July, however, the events in Paris were known in all their grim detail. The Dauphin told him that he would not return to the city. He could never enter the place again, he said, without being reminded of the terrible crimes that had been committed there. On 29 June 1418 he issued a furious public denunciation of the violence from Bourges. He declared that the King's government was no longer his own. The Duke of Burgundy had taken over the King's seals and was issuing whatever orders and proclamations he pleased in Charles's name. The Dauphin announced his intention of assuming the government of France himself by virtue of the titular lieutenancy that had been conferred on him by the Armagnac council the year before. No one, he declared, should pay any further attention to documents from Paris bearing the King's seal.[48]

The Dauphin Charles, in whose name a new Armagnac government was to rise from the ashes of the old, was now fifteen years old. Although he was destined to live longer than any of his siblings he was physically weak and outwardly unimpressive: pallid, short, with spindly legs that gave him a rather awkward gait. Charles was earnest, intelligent and shrewd and would eventually become an astute judge of men. But he lacked self-confidence even as an adult. He was moody, changeable and occasionally depressive, naturally risk-averse, withdrawn and taciturn in company, uncomfortable in the presence of strangers. Some of these qualities stare out at us from the famous portrait attributed to Jean Fouquet in the Louvre. They made him temperamentally averse to war and uninterested in the chivalric values to which his father had been devoted in his brief prime. They also meant that he was easily led by intimates with stronger personalities than his own, a weakness which provoked persistent faction fighting among the men around him.

In the summer of 1418 and for some years afterwards most of the Dauphin's entourage were driven men whose outlook was shaped by the anger and bitterness of a decade of civil war. These men made the gulf between the Dauphin and the Burgundians unbridgeable. Tanneguy du Châtel and Arnaud-Guilhem de Barbazan were the principal surviving captains of the fallen government of Bernard of Armagnac. The Gascon Arnaud-Guilhem de Barbazan, widely admired by both sides as a chivalrous and honourable knight,

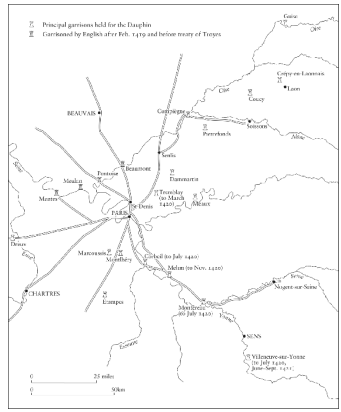
became the Dauphin's Marshal and first chamberlain. He emerged as the 'principal conductor of his wars … and chief governor of his affairs', according to the Burgundians. Arnaud-Guilhem once described Tanneguy du Châtel as an impulsive hothead (*'homme chaulx, soudain et hatif'*). This assessment underrated his political intelligence but it was not unfair, for Tanneguy had imbibed all the party spirit and brutality of his patron. At least as important as the military men in the Dauphin's entourage was the powerful freemasonry of the higher judiciary and civil service who rallied to the Dauphin after his flight from Paris. These were men who had risen through the patronage of the houses of Berry, Orléans or Anjou and were brutally displaced by the Burgundian seizure of Paris. Robert le Maçon was one of the Dauphin's most trusted counsellors, *'bien prudent et sage clerc'* according to a sound judge. He was an ambitious career administrator who had begun his career in the service of the house of Anjou. By 1418 he had become, in the words of the Burgundian chronicler of Paris, 'one of the biggest men of the [Armagnac] faction'. Equally influential was Jean Louvet, another Angevin protégé, who was generally known as the President of Provence because he had presided over Louis of Anjou's Chambre des Comptes at Aix. Louvet became the effective controller of the Dauphin's finances, but his influence extended well beyond money. Conspiratorial, unscrupulous, a sinuous negotiator, he was disliked and distrusted by Burgundians and Armagnacs alike: 'one of the worst Christians in the world', wrote the partisan Parisian chronicler; 'a shameful and unworthy man', agreed the Duke of Orléans' chancellor Guillaume Cousinot. Raymond Raguier, the former war treasurer and director of the King's personal finances, was another financial expert. He had escaped from prison during the massacres and found his way out of Paris, joining the Dauphin's council a few weeks later. Raguier's three grand houses in Paris were all appropriated by Burgundian notables after his flight. Martin Gouges Bishop of Clermont was a former chancellor of Jean de Berry, one of the inner circle of the Count of Armagnac's advisers and a close personal friend of Louvet and Tanneguy du Châtel. He had escaped from Paris in disguise during the riots, abandoning all his property in the city, the second time in his life that he had had to flee the capital in fear of the Duke of Burgundy's revenge. The lawyer Jean de Vailly, one of the presidents of the Paris Parlement, had served as Louis de Guyenne's chancellor. He was a man of humble birth (his father had been a notary), perhaps the archetype of the 'filth' denounced by John the Fearless in his manifesto of the previous year.

All these men knew that they had no future in a government

dominated by the Duke of Burgundy. By interest as well as inclination they were strongly opposed to a reconciliation between the Dauphin and the Duke which could only lead to their disgrace. But there were others whose stature would have ensured them a place in any administration and whose support of the Dauphin was a matter of principle. Jacques Gélu Archbishop of Tours, an old protégé of Louis of Orléans who became one of his most practised diplomats, had also narrowly escaped death in the riots. Regnault de Chartres, perhaps the Dauphin's most statesmanlike councillor, came from a family of dedicated Orléanists scarred by war and political violence. He had lost all three of his brothers at Agincourt and would shortly lose his father to a Parisian lynch mob.[49]

The first instinct of these men when they gathered round the Dauphin at Bourges was to fight back. The surviving Armagnac captains from Paris began to recruit troops among the scattered mercenaries and retainers of the Count of Armagnac. Their efforts were supported by prominent noblemen from the provinces of the centre and south. Within a fortnight of the Burgundian coup a visitor to the Dauphin's diminutive court reported that he already had 4,000 mounted men under arms with more on the way. Some of these troops were used to secure the line of the Loire. Others were sent north to occupy the river valleys around Paris. Arnaud-Guilhem de Barbazan was installed at Melun on the Seine and Tanneguy du Châtel at Meaux on the Marne. There were other major Armagnac garrisons at Montereau, dominating the confluence of the Seine and the Yonne, and at Montlhéry on the Orléans road. From these places the Armagnacs were able to blockade the capital from the east and south at the moment when the English were advancing into the Seine valley from the west. North of the capital the valley of the Oise, a vital channel of supply and communications, was bitterly contested. The Burgundians already held Pontoise and swiftly reoccupied all the crossings of the river, including Creil, Pont-Sainte-Maxence and Noyon. But the Armagnacs had large garrisons in Louis of Orléans' fortresses at Pierrefonds and Coucy and in the walled town of Guise. In July a troop of soldiers from the garrison of Pierrefonds succeeded in capturing Compiègne, the largest town of the middle Oise, standing at the hub of the road and river routes between Paris and Flanders, Picardy and Champagne. It was a classic coup: a carthorse slaughtered on the drawbridge to prevent it from being raised while troops concealed in the woods burst in with the support of Armagnac loyalists in the town. The Burgundian captain, the celebrated Hector de Saveuses, was forced to withdraw to the tower of the abbey church of St Corneille, from which he was shortly expelled with all his men. A Picard nobleman, Guillaume de

Gamaches, eventually took over the place and filled it with Dauphinist partisans. With its two castles and complete circuit of walls, it was an ideal base for irregular warfare along the valley of the Oise. Compiègne was to be a thorn in the flesh of the Burgundians for years.[50]



11 Blockade of Paris, 1418–1422

Paris had now been at the heart of the civil war since 1410. It had been almost continuously blockaded by the companies of one side or the other for more than a year. In the country around, the garrisons of both sides supported themselves by indiscriminate plundering. The effect on the life of the city was catastrophic. The streets were filled with soldiers and refugees. A Parisian chronicler who lived through these years asserted that the countryside had been entirely depopulated for twenty-five miles around the city. This is an exaggeration, but it is clear that hundreds of villages were abandoned as the peasants fled to the security of the walled towns. The effect was quickly felt in the city's markets. A measure of rye, a basic staple of the Parisian diet, which had retailed for between six and nine *sous* before 1415, cost ten times as much in 1419. There were severe shortages of grain, meat, oil and firewood. These misfortunes coincided with a serious epidemic of smallpox which affected much of northern France but was particularly virulent in Paris. A population weakened by hunger succumbed in large numbers. Huge burial pits had to be opened in all the city's cemeteries. Over the four-month period from June to October 1418 as much as a quarter of the population of Paris may have perished, a level of mortality exceeded only at the height of the major epidemics of bubonic plague in 1348 and the mid-1360s.[51]

In August 1418 the discontents and tensions of the city exploded in a fresh burst of violence. It was a very hot summer. The smallpox epidemic was at its height. The lanes and tenements were alive with

anger against the raiders around the city, the high price of food, the constant rounds of watch duty and street patrols. The Armagnacs were blamed for all of these things. Fresh waves of arrests had once more filled the city's prisons with political prisoners, Armagnac sympathisers and supposed fifth columnists, most of whom had committed no crime. In the evening of 20 August 1418 a large armed mob gathered outside the Châtelet. They were led by the public executioner Capeluche and the old butchers' leaders of 1413: the brothers Legoix, the Saint-Yons and the *écorcheur* Simon Caboche. During the night they stormed the Châtelet, scaling the walls and invading the central courtyard. The prisoners were pulled out of the cells and battered to death on the ground one by one. More than 200 perished. Capeluche then led the crowd through the streets of Paris to the Bastille, where twelve former officers of the King and the Dauphin were being held, including one of the King's private secretaries and his treasurer. The prisoners were taken out by the country gate by their guards and escorted to Vincennes while the mob began to break down the gate on the city side. The Duke of Burgundy was lodging nearby at the Hôtel des Tournelles. He approached the mob on horseback. Capeluche came up to him as if he were an old friend, addressed him as his 'good brother' and to the visible horror of the Duke took him by the hand. John ordered the crowd in the King's name to stop. But he did not have the means to impose his will. Almost all his troops had left to fight in Normandy and the Oise valley. He had only a small armed escort with him. Sensing that the situation was getting out of control, John agreed to have most of the prisoners brought back from Vincennes and delivered up to the mob leaders on their swearing to bring them safely to the Châtelet for trial. The unfortunate prisoners were committed to the custody of Capeluche and his companions and escorted through the streets. On their way they were attacked by another mob and lynched.

By now there were at least 4,000 men on the streets. They broke into the Petit Châtelet, the Hôtel de Bourbon, the Louvre and every other place where political prisoners were reported to be held, and murdered between eighty and a hundred people. After the sun had risen the council met in the Louvre, while outside the killing began to spread beyond the prisons. People were denounced as Armagnacs in the streets and battered to death or dragged out of their homes to be beheaded before the baying crowd. The massacres continued into the afternoon when the mob was finally persuaded to leave the city and attack the Armagnac garrison at Montlhéry. While they were away the Duke of Burgundy, faced with the prospect of a proletarian revolution in Paris, finally repudiated the mob and

turned to the oligarchy of the city to reassert its authority. Over the following days some 1,600 men, civic office-holders, civil servants, priests and the richer householders, about one in fifty of the population, appeared before him to swear that they would uphold the 'party of the King and the Duke of Burgundy'. They promised to report the first signs of sedition to the authorities and at all costs prevent large gatherings of the inhabitants. Capeluche was summarily condemned to death and beheaded by his own deputy along with two other ringleaders. The tensions at their execution at Les Halles were palpable. Members of the watch committees had to be posted with companies of crossbowmen at every street corner. When the mob at Montlhéry heard what had happened they rushed back to avenge their leader. They found the city gates shut in their faces.[52]

In hindsight the crisis of 1418 can be seen as a turning point in the fortunes of what had once been Europe's largest and most affluent city. Hitherto, in spite of the difficult economic and demographic conditions, Paris had performed the classic role of cities by constantly renewing its population with migrants in search of work and physical security. But over the following years its population declined to less than half of what it had been in 1400. Rents and land prices fell steeply. Thousands of houses and shops were left empty. Some quarters of the city were almost abandoned. Within two years of the attacks on the Italian quarter in June 1418, most of the once prosperous Italian community had gone, in some cases moving to rising financial centres such as Bruges and London. The number of resident members of the University fell by about two-thirds. Nearly every house in the quarter of the northern Marais where the top Armagnac functionaries had lived was confiscated. Most of them must have been abandoned well before the commissioners arrived to demand entry. The banking and the luxury trades faded away without the rich clientele that had sustained them. The walled-up gates visibly symbolised the city's decline as a great market. For those who remained behind the tax records tell their own melancholy story of abandoned businesses and declining incomes.[53]

Across the capital the mansions of the aristocracy and of the greater bishops and abbots stood empty or were taken over by Burgundian and later English officials, as their former occupants moved away from a city which was no longer a great political capital. Even the dukes of Burgundy only rarely and briefly visited the city that their followers had conquered. John the Fearless refused to enter it again after November 1418. His successor preferred to conduct his business from Dijon or Brussels. The Hôtel

de Bourgogne, once the centre of political intrigue, had been trashed by the Armagnacs after the Duke's flight in 1413 and stood empty and derelict for years. For much of the world beyond its walls Paris was the 'homicidal city' of the Norman poet Robert Blondel. His instinctive aversion was widely shared. Jean Gerson's quivering jeremiad against the 'once great city, stained with blood and evil', written from his refuge at Lyon within a few weeks of the massacres, was transcribed for Charles of Orléans in his English prison. The Dauphin himself retained a horror of Paris which persisted throughout his life. He would not see the city's streets again until he rode through them as King in 1436. One of his first acts then was to have the bones of Bernard of Armagnac, Ramonet de la Guerre and Henri and Jean de Marle retrieved from the unconsecrated ground in which they had lain for eighteen years and splendidly reinterred in the priory church of Saint-Martin-des-Champs. For the rest of his life Charles VII preferred to govern France from the castles of Berry and the Loire valley, as most of his successors would do until the seventeenth century.[54]

Notes

1
St Albans Chron., ii, 710–12, 724–6; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 96–9; *Brut*, ii, 382; Waurin, *Rec. cron.*, ii, 241; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 79–80; Basin, *Hist.*, i, 50–2; *Foed.*, ix, 479–80, 487; *Rot. Norm.*, 146–8, 151; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 96; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 179, 208; Raoulet, 'Chron.', 158.

2
St Albans Chron., ii, 714–18; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 101–13; Livius, *Vita*, 35–41; *Mems. London*, 657; *Brut*, ii, 383. *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 104–6; *Brut*, ii, 383–4; *Cron. Norm.,* 30. Ships: PRO E364/54, m. 2 (Welles, Huskard), E364/57, m. 2 (Shedde); *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 714–16; *Mems. London,* 657; *Brut*, ii, 383; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 104–6. Casualties: *Extr. chartes Calvados,* ii, 410.

3
Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 113–15; Livius, *Vita*, 41; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 720; *Brut*, ii, 384; *Mems. London*, 657; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 106–8; *Cron. Norm.*, 30; *Foed.*, ix, 490–1, 494; *Rot. Norm.*, 153. Description of citadel: Blondel, *Oeuvres*, ii, 239. *Arrière-ban*: AD Hérault A8, fols 258–60; *Beaucourt, i, 437–8.

4
Itin. Jean, 435; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 184–7, 192–209; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 236–7. Treaties: e.g. *Rec. mon. tiers état,* ii, 71–4. Army: Chauvelays, 244–9; AD Côte d'Or B11739; *Comptes E. Bourg.,* ii, no. 4389. Proclamation: 'Chron. Cordeliers', 236; *Inv. AC Amiens,* ii, 25; *Ord.*, x, 430.

5
Itin. Jean, 435; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 112–18; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 83, 210–14; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 238. Villiers: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 337. Artillery: Garnier, 47.

6

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 210–11, 213, 244; *Flammermont, 269–70.

7

Itin. Jean, 435; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 114–16, 120, 124–8; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 238–9, 240–1; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 213–16; Fenin, *Mém.*, 79–80.

8

Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 124, 128, 130; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 340–1; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 216–17; *Itin. Jean,* 435–6. Gates: *Journ. B. Paris,* 73, 79. Plan: *Chastellain, 'Chron.', i, 324–7n; Verbruggen.

9

Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 124–6, 130–2; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 34–7, 39–41; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 340–1; *Journ. B. Paris,* 79–83. Prov. Merchants: AN KK 1009, fol. 2vo.

10

Tax strike: *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 150; Besse, *Recueil*, 19–37; *Dognon (1889), 495–6. Grants to Duke: *Extr. Reg. Tournai,* i, 144–5, 153–5; *Inv. AC Amiens,* ii, 25, 26, 27; *Comptes E. Bourg.,* ii, no. 2317; Boutiot, ii, 365–6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 240. Coinage: *Beaucourt, i, 438–9; Dieudonné, 488; *Dépenses*, nos 748, 1166; *Richard, 94–7; *Ord.*, x, 422–4; *Rec. doc. monnaies,* ii, 206–7; Lafaurie, *Monnaies*, i, nos 402–6. Expedients: *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 108, 144–6, 150; *Journ. B. Paris,* 81 and *n^{5}; Coville (1933), 187–98; BN Fr. 6747, fols 43–97, 101vo–102; *Collections du Trésor*, 47–8. Messengers: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 108.

11

Brut, ii, 384; *Foed.*, ix, 490–1, 493–4.

12

Upton, *De Studio Militari*, 134–45; *St Albans Chron.,* ii, 712–14; Waurin, *Rec. cron.*, ii, 429; *Coll. doc. Angleterre,* no. 340 (Clarence).

13

Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 116–18; Livius, *Vita*, 42; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 164. Popham: *Rot. Norm.,* 231–2, *HoC*, iv, 113–17; *ODNB,* xliv, 895–6. Ashton: *Rot. Norm.*, 320; BN Fr. 26042/5299 (13 Mar. 1418). Exchequer: *Foed.*, ix, 507; *Rôles Normands*, no. 297, 365; Curry (1998 [1]), 91–2, *101–2, *104. Coins: Lafaurie, *Monnaies*, i, no. 440. Allegiance: *Foed.*, ix, 500, 510–11; *Rot. Norm.*, 154, 181, 223–4, 334–47, 368.

14

Basin, *Hist.*, i, 52; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 116, 118; Livius, *Vita*, 42–3; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 160–2, 164; *Rot. Norm.*, 153–4, 320; *Rôles Normands*, no. 231; Fenin, *Mém.*, 99–100. Defences of Lisieux: R. Jones, 236–9.

15

Second passage: PRO E364/57, m. 5 (Carew); *Cron. Norm.,* 33–4. Duchy of Alençon: *Rot. Norm.*, 175–9, 180–1, 181–2, 183–4, 184, 187–9, 191, 192–4, 202; *Foed.*, ix, 502–3; Cagny, *Chron.*, 20–2, 110–12; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita,* 119–24; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 338, 347; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 162–4. Domfront: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 347.

16

Foed., ix, 503, 506, 511–15; *Inv. AD Loire-Inférieure,* iii, 75 (E179); Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 338. Betrothal: *Preuves Bretagne,* ii, 947–50.

17

Itin. Jean, 435–6; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 342; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 132–4; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 249; *Dépenses,* nos 334, 337, 389N; BN Fr. n.a. 20128/124 (Seine, Oise). Beauce: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 220; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 242; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 122; 'Geste des nobles', 165; *Inv. AC Toulouse,* i, 490

(AA37/50). Contact with English: *Dépenses,* no. 692; *Rot. Norm.,* 222, 230, 358–9, 369.

18

Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 89, 122, 136–40, 154–6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 218–20, 226; *Journ. B. Paris,* 84; *Itin. Jean,* 436; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 242; 'Geste des nobles', 166. Money: Plancher, iii, 479–80; Boutiot, ii, 365–6.

19

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 227–30; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 342–3; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 140; 'Geste des nobles', 166; *Itin. Jean*, 436.

20

Itin. Jean, 436; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 230–5; *Dépenses*, 9, and nos 63, 112, 123, 136, 251, 342, 745; *Extr. Reg. Tournai,* i, 147–8; *Comptes E. Bourg.,* i, no. 42. On Morvilliers: 'Geste des nobles', 160; Maugis, iii, 60. On Rapiout: ibid. and *Ord.*, x, 163.

21

Great council: *Ord.*, x, 424–6. Plot: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 237–9; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 343–4; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 158–60; Fenin, *Mém.*, 83–4; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 244; *Ord.*, x, 428; *Itin. Jean,* 436–7. Midi: *Dognon (1889), 496–7.

22

Foed., ix, 482–3, 494–5, 496–9, 505, 509–10, 517–19, 537; Chaplais, *Eng. Med. Dipl. Prac.,* 40–1; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 108, 144, 168; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 339; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 126, 129–30.

23

Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 127–32; Livius, *Vita*, 46–8; Meuillon, *Faits*, 21; *Foed.*, ix, 532–4. Damage to town: *Foed.*, ix, 565, 589; *Rôles Normands,* no. 353.

24

Itin. Jean, 437; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 244–5; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 240; *Ord.*, x, 436–43; *Plancher, iii, no. 302; *Dépenses*, nos 112, 114, 124, 341n^{3}, 603, 612, 1152.

25

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 239, 240, 245; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 150–2, 178–82, 184, 188; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 345; *Journ. B. Paris*, 84; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 254.

26

Falaise: Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 132–8; Livius, *Vita*, 48–9; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 344; *Foed.*, ix, 540, 543–4; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 726; *Rot. Norm.*, 225, 235, 245–6; PRO C64/9, m. 22. Conquest plans: *Rot. Norm.*, 248–9, 254–5, 259–60, 317–19; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 139–40, 144; Strecche, 'Chron.', 162. Raids: *Coll. Bastard d'Estang,* no. 714 (Châteaudun); BL Add. Chart. 3490 (Beaugency). Orléans: BN PO 944/Crossy/4; *Inv. AC Orléans,* i, 93; *Déniau, 617–18.

27

Extr. Reg. Tournai, i, 143–5, 146–7, 149–51, 153–5; *Ord.*, x, 429–34.

28

*Roger, 290n^{114}, 309–10 (on Bouteiller's background, ibid., 277–9, 281–2, 284–7); *Cron. Norm.*, 29–30 (wrongly giving the date 1416); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 243–4. Caudebec is included with Dieppe in a list of towns declaring for the Queen in her manifesto of 30 Jan.: *Inv. AC Toulouse,* i, 490 (AA37/50). Rouen: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 247–8, 250; *Beaurepaire, 'Accord', 311–14 (lieutenant); *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 148; *Cron. Norm.*, 36–7. On Braquemont: Gonzalez, App., 85–7; Rucquoi, 412–13.

29
Dépenses, no. 838 (date); *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 172–4, 184; Monstrelet, *Chron.,* iii, 246–7; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 246–7. John V: *Preuves Bretagne,* ii, 966–9. Summons: Besse, *Recueil*, 154–60; *Guichenon, iv, 255. On La Tombe (suppressed in 1350): A. Beaunier and J.-M. Besse, *Abbayes et prieurés de l'ancienne France,* vi (1913), 59.

30
Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 184, 188–90.

31
Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 184–90.

32
Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 141–3, 147–50; *Cron. Norm.*, 34–5; Livius, *Vita*, 51–3; *Foed.*, ix, 545, 554–5, 556–7, 618; *Rot. Norm.*, 227, 230, 235, 319–20; *Rôles Normands,* no. 86; *Delisle, 334–9. Date Cherbourg siege: BN Fr. n.a. 21832/232. On Piquet: 'Songe véritable', 263, 284, 290, 369–72; 'Remontrances', 425–6.

33
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 258; *Cron. Norm.,* 34; *Chron. Bec,* 85, 86–7; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 144–6; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 347; *Rôles Normands,* nos 73 (misdated, should be 9 Apr.), 131. Clarence was outside Honfleur in late March: *Cat. Arch. Joursanvault*, no. 880.

34
Dépenses, nos 313, 315–27; *Preuves Bretagne,* 966–9; *Extr. Cat. Courcelles,* 46 (Cousinot). On Savoisy: *Fasti*, xi, 173–4.

35
Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 192; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 249–51; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 321–2; *Dépenses*, nos 179, 206, 722, 819; *Comptes E. Bourg.,* iii, no. 9783; AD Nord B1913/54470, B1914/54500.

36
'Chron. Cordeliers', 248; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 208–22; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 117–20; *Guichenon, iv, 255–7.

37
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 251–5; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 322–3; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 248, 250–1; 'Lettere Lucchesi', 183; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 194–6, 198; *Journ. B. Paris*, 86.

38
Conference: Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 117–20. Paris: *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 224–8; *Journ. B. Paris*, 86–7; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 348.

39
St Albans Chron., ii, 730–2; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 165–6; *Cal. Letter Books I,* 197–8; PRO C64/9, m. 40d (10 Apr.) (summons). Exeter: PRO E403/633, mm. 15–16 (3 Mar.); *Cal. Letter Books I*, 197–8; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 732 (giving too late a date). Evreux: *Foed.*, ix, 589.

40
Reopening: *Dépenses*, no. 390C; 'Extr. journ. Trésor', no. 546. Papal mediators: *Foed.*, ix, 558–60, 578–9; *Beaucourt, i, 328; *Cal. Pap. R. Letters,* vii, 6–7; BN Coll. Bourgogne 21, fol. 50. On Finlay: D. E. R. Watt, 4–5; *Acta Concilii*, ii, 84–5. On Young: ibid., iv, 357–8; *Apostolic Camera and Scottish Benefices*, ed. A. I. Cameron (1934), 1; **Cop. S. Andree*, 268–70; *Dépenses*, no. 170.

41
Itin. Jean, 439–40; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 255–6; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 251–3; *Foed.*, ix, 578–9; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 124–5; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi,

228; *Fenin, *Mém.*, 255–67.

42

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 256–7; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 253–4; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 228–30; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 347.

43

Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 348; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 259–61; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 230–2; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 126; *Auctarium Chartul. U. Paris*, ii, 244. Topography: Berty and Tisserand (1897 [2]), 87–94 (not to be confused with the Porte des Cordeliers further south, also called the Porte St-Germain: ibid., 95–9).

44

Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 126–8, 134; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 232–4; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 348–9; *Journ. B. Paris*, 88–90; *Vielliard, 131–3, 138–9; *Beaucourt, i, 213–14; *Cron. Norm.*, 37; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 261–4; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 255–6; 'Lettere Lucchesi', 187–91; 'Doc. surprise Paris', 47–9.

45

Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 234–6; *Vielliard, 133–6, 147–51, 152; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 265; *Fenin, *Mém.*, 268–9; 'Lettere Lucchesi', 185–7; 'Doc. surprise Paris', 49–51; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 256–7; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 86.

46

'Doc. surprise Paris', 50, 52; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 266; *Journ. B. Paris*, 91; *Vielliard, 151; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 134.

47

Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 135–7; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 242–50; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 350–1; *Journ. B. Paris*, 96–8, 323; *Vielliard, 151–2; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 269–71; Fenin, *Mém.*, 97; Cagny*, Chron.*, 112–14; *Auctarium Chartul. U. Paris,* ii, 246 and n^{12}.

48

Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 132–3; *Beaucourt, i, 94–5, 100, 439–40; *Vielliard, 152; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 252; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 352.

49

Dauphin: Chastellain, 'Chron.', ii, 178–85; Basin, *Hist.*, ii, 278–80. Barbazan: *Mém. France et Bourgogne,* i, 306; BN Fr. 5061, fols 108, 111–111vo. Tanneguy: BN Fr. 5061, fol. 125 ('hothead', from Barbazan's submissions at his trial). Le Maçon: *Journ. B. Paris*, 89; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 335; Beaucourt, i, 64. Louvet: Beaucourt, i, 64–5; *Journ. B. Paris,* 89n^{4}; 'Geste des nobles', 190. Raguier: *Songe véritable', 420–1. Gouges: 'Geste des nobles', 172; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 355; *Journ. B. Paris,* 89; AN JJ170/286 (property). Vailly: Maugis, iii, 36; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 202 ('filth'). Gélu: Gélu, 'Vie', 272–3. Regnault: *Fasti*, iii, 200–1; Gonzalez, App. 120–2; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 151.

50

*Beaucourt, i, 425–6, 439, 441–2; 'Entrée de la reine', 108; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 267–9. Compiègne: Carolus-Barré (1988), 385; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 267, 278–80, 381; Fenin, *Mém.*, 97–9. Coucy, Guise: Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 88; *Inv. AC Amiens*, ii, 28. On Gamaches: Demurger, 256–7.

51

Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 353, 354, 355–6; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 268–70, 284–8; *Journ. B. Paris*, 102–3, 105, 106, 111–12, 113, 115–17, 136; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 183–4. And see Fourquin, 306–7, 311, 314–17, 357–60, 368–9, 377–86; Coyecque, i, 117–18.

52

Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 149–54, 155–6, 158–9; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 262–8; *Journ. B. Paris*, 106–11; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 353–4; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 289–91; Leroux, *Paris*, 371–89.

53

Favier (1974), 57–61, 67, 72–4, 116–18, 179; Lehoux (1951), 221–7; Thompson (1991), 121–31 (geographical distribution of Armagnac property).

54

Dukes of Burgundy: Ewert, 107, 112. H. de Bourgogne: *Plancher, iii, no. 306; *W. Paravicini, 'Le temps retrouvé. Philippe le Bon à Paris en 1461', in Paravicini and Schnerb, 456–60; Blondel, *Oeuvres*, i, 72–81 (esp. l. 745); Gerson, 'Deploratio', esp. 257–9, 278; *Journ. B. Paris*, 323, 336–7.

CHAPTER XIV

The Siege of Rouen, 1418–1419

Early in June 1418 Henry V joined his army at Bec-Hellouin and advanced to the Eure. On 8 June the English crossed the river and laid siege to Louviers from both banks. Louviers was the last walled town of the Eure before it flowed into the Seine. It was a place of some strength, defended by a circuit of high modern walls and a triple line of ditches and manned by a Burgundian garrison. But their resistance lasted little more than a week. The English filled in the moat, undermined the walls and battered the town with artillery. The defenders launched several courageous sorties in an attempt to silence the English batteries. They made effective use of their own artillery, shooting projectiles into the English lines, one of which narrowly missed the King. But by the middle of June several breaches had been made and the besiegers began to prepare an assault. The townsmen, terrified of a sack, forced the garrison to negotiate a conditional surrender agreement. Its terms allowed a brief interval for relief. But with the government in chaos in Paris there was no prospect of that. Louviers punctually opened its gates on 23 June and submitted to the English King's mercy. But Henry was not merciful. The surrender of Louviers opened a new and harsher phase of the English conquest. He refused to pardon the captain of the town, who had previously been captain of Bayeux and had sworn not to serve against him again. He hanged eight gunners of the garrison in retaliation for the casualties that they had inflicted. He imposed an indemnity of 8,000 *écus* on the inhabitants.

One of the men who was present to witness the scene was Cardinal Orsini. He had come into the English camp under safe-conduct to explore the possibilities of a negotiated peace. Orsini disapproved of Henry's brutality (he protested against the execution of the gunners), and he was taken aback by the King's obvious determination to press on with the conquest of Normandy. His report must have made gloomy reading when he returned to Paris. Henry had told him that his victories represented the will of God, who had sent him into France to chastise its sinful inhabitants. The visible disintegration of the country under its current rulers was proof of the justice of his claims. The Cardinal concluded that the King's military position was so strong that for the moment any

attempt at negotiation was doomed. The advance of the English seemed to be unstoppable. On 27 June the first contingents of Henry's army reached the Seine at Pont-de-l'Arche.[1]

Pont-de-l'Arche was a walled town on the south bank of the Seine. It was important mainly for its famous stone bridge of twenty-four arches, the only one between Rouen and Vernon. The bridge was fortified at both ends. It was defended by the river gate on the town side and by a great circular keep built on an island by the opposite bank of the river. The whole had been constructed by Philip Augustus in 1209 as part of a scheme of fortification designed to secure control of the lower valley of the Seine after the expulsion of the Angevin kings of England. When the English appeared before Pont-de-l'Arche in June 1418 the defence of Upper Normandy was in disarray. Robert de Braquemont had struggled on as royal lieutenant in the province even though he had been stripped of his office as Admiral of France by the triumphant Burgundians and many of the towns and garrisons for which he was responsible had repudiated the government which had appointed him. Braquemont was a good strategist. He realised that the only hope of holding Normandy was to keep the English south of the Seine, a broad, fast-flowing river which was the only practicable line of defence. He had therefore made no attempt to rescue Louviers and concentrated all his efforts on saving Pont-de-l'Arche. He had been remarkably successful in uniting the Normans of both allegiances behind this enterprise. At the beginning of June he had persuaded twenty-five walled towns of Normandy to enter into a treaty under which they had agreed to a limited measure of military cooperation regardless of party allegiance. He had also succeeded in raising a substantial field army from the towns and nobility of the province. About 1,000 men had been put into Pont-de-l'Arche under the command of Jean Malet de Graville, a firm Orléanist then at the outset of a long and famous military career. In addition there were about 2,000 men stationed on the north bank to stop the English trying to bridge the river or cross it by boat, and another 800 held in reserve ten miles away at the castle of Étrepagny. Braquemont's reward was to be dismissed just as the English were approaching the town and denounced as a traitor in the streets of Paris.[2]

He was replaced by an ardent Burgundian partisan, the lord of Chastellux, one of the Burgundian captains responsible for the capture of Paris, who had recently been made a Marshal of France by a grateful Queen. He arrived to take command just in time to witness the collapse of the French position on the Seine. In the early hours of 4 July 1418 the English succeeded in crossing the river. They had occupied a large island in the middle of the stream

opposite the suburban abbey of Bonport, where they concentrated a large force under the command of Sir John Cornwall. About half a mile upstream another English force set up a noisy diversion. While the French moved the bulk of their forces along the riverbank to confront them, Cornwall silently crossed from the island in eight small boats assembled from wicker frames and animal skins. He was accompanied by his fifteen-year-old son and about sixty men. They brought with them a single horse and some small artillery pieces. There was a fight at the water's edge, where a small number of French troops had been left to guard the bank. The alarm went up. But it was too late. By the time that the rest of the French force had returned to meet the new threat another 1,000 English had made the crossing in relays. When the sun rose Cornwall had established a secure bridgehead on the right bank. The Duke of Clarence crossed the river during the morning with another 4,000 men, about half the army. A strong French counter-attack was beaten off. The English could now invest both ends of the bridge and seal off the town. Their engineers began to assemble a pontoon bridge made of timber and hide which had been manufactured in sections in England and brought to the siege lines from Harfleur.

Chastellux's army broke up before his eyes. Most of the men had been drawn from the garrisons of Rouen and other towns. With the English across the Seine their first priority was to defend their own walls. Inside Pont-de-l'Arche Jean Malet and his garrison recognised defeat. They sent parlementaires into the English camp and two days after the crossing, on 6 July, a conditional surrender was agreed. They promised to submit on 20 July unless by then the place had been relieved by the King of France or the Dauphin in person. Malet sent messengers to the Duke of Burgundy, accompanied by a delegation from the city of Rouen, bearing the terms of the surrender agreement and a desperate appeal for relief. With them rode an English herald. His mission was to call on John the Fearless to declare whether he intended to honour his treaty of neutrality with Henry V.[3]

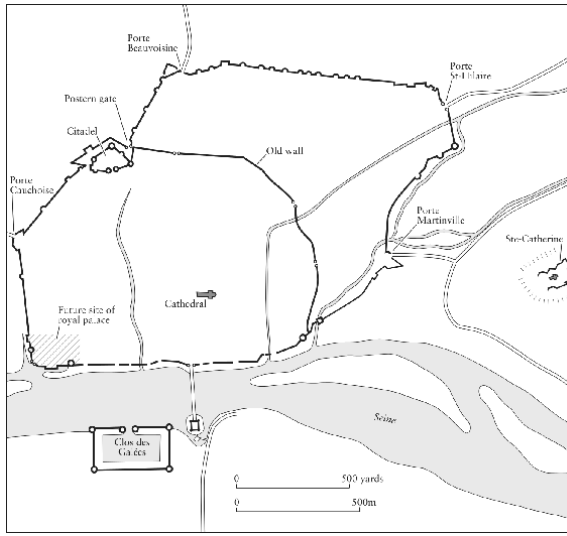
On 11 July 1418, they found John the Fearless at Provins, preoccupied with the preparations for his return to Paris. Everything there was in confusion. The Queen's administration was in the process of being transferred from Troyes. All the principal officers of state and many senior officials and judges in Paris were being replaced by creatures of the Duke of Burgundy in the face of sullen obstruction from the civil service. The Parlement, which been in the forefront of the resistance, had been suspended and remained closed for six weeks while its personnel were purged. For the moment the operations of government were paralysed. On 14 July

the Duke of Burgundy entered Paris with much ceremony by the Porte Saint-Antoine. He was accompanied by Isabelle of Bavaria in a golden litter and by all the leading Burgundian captains. They were escorted through the streets by 3,000 men-at-arms, 1,500 crossbowmen and 1,200 prominent citizens in uniform blue robes who had gone out to meet them at the bridge of Charenton. The procession made its way slowly across the city in the bright sunshine through streets strewn with flowers and lined with enthusiastic Parisians wearing St Andrew's crosses. The air was filled with cheers and a deafening cacophony of trumpets and horns. Charles VI received them at the Louvre. He graciously welcomed the man who had murdered his brother. He kissed his estranged Queen. The crowd crammed into the great hall of St Louis wept. Then, spurning the traditional wine and spices proffered by the King, the Duke of Burgundy promptly left with the Queen to attend to more important business.[4]

On the following day, 15 July, the Queen presided over a crisis meeting of the council. The main item of business was the situation on the Norman front. The representatives of Rouen and Pont-de-l'Arche were present. They were joined by messengers sent by the Bastard of Alençon from Domfront. After a siege of three months he had agreed to surrender the fortress to the Earl of Warwick on 22 July unless he was relieved. The Normans pressed for action. They wanted both Pont-de-l'Arche and Domfront relieved, Rouen reinforced and the English sieges at Cherbourg and Honfleur broken up. It was an impossible demand. But, ignoring the difficulties, the council went through the motions of complying. They ordered the immediate recruitment of an army of 15,000 men. They proposed to find 2,000 men-at-arms and 1,000 crossbowmen from the troops with John the Fearless in Paris and to support them with 12,000 infantry levies recruited in Paris and the towns of Upper Normandy. The English herald was sent back to Pont-de-l'Arche with a defiant message from John the Fearless declaring that when the time came he would confront Henry V in battle. The Duke of Burgundy's dealings with the English had always been opportunistic. Now that he had won control of the King and the government it was in his interest to present himself as the defender of France against her ancient enemy. But John could not fight the English and the Armagnacs at once. Even if it had been possible to raise the troops and lead them to Pont-de-l'Arche within the five days that remained, there was no prospect of an army consisting mainly of raw urban infantry overcoming the experienced professional troops of the King of England. In the event the council's plans proved impossible to execute. Pont-de-l'Arche surrendered on 20 July and

Domfront two days later. Shortly afterwards the Duke of Exeter appeared before the walls of Rouen with a herald to reconnoitre the defences and summon the place to surrender. The response was a powerful cavalry sortie from the gates which resulted in the death of many of Exeter's company. At about midnight on 29 July Henry V arrived with the bulk of his army outside the city.[5]

Rouen was the largest French city which the English had besieged since the outset of the war eighty years earlier. Its thirty-five parishes were home to a permanent population of between 20,000 and 25,000 people. Its defences were outwardly imposing, 'a prowde araye … welle hyt was ordaynyd for warre', wrote John Page, an English soldier, probably an archer, whose account of the siege in doggerel verse is the most vivid of the contemporary narratives. Rouen was enclosed by a high wall nearly four miles in circumference, pierced by five fortified gates on the landward side and protected by a deep dry ditch. Most of these works dated from the beginning of the thirteenth century. On the north side, the city was dominated by the great citadel which Philip Augustus had built after 1204 to mark his conquest of the Norman capital from the Angevin kings of England. Since then a sprawling suburb had grown up north-east of the citadel to house the textile workshops and the tenements in which the industrial population worked and lived. These districts had recently been enclosed by a major extension of the walls. But there remained eight unprotected suburban parishes beyond the walls, all of which had been systematically demolished as the English approached, along with the Benedictine priory of St Gervais on the west and the Clos des Galées, the naval arsenal on the opposite side of the river. The towers and gates bristled with guns overlooking the desolate wasteland which the demolition teams had left around the city. A long fortified bridge constructed partly of stone and partly of timber linked the city to a heavily manned fort on the south bank. The task of organising the defence of the place had fallen to Guy Le Bouteillier and a group of Burgundian captains sent in haste from Paris. They commanded a professional garrison of between 1,200 and 1,600 men. But the main burden of the defence fell upon the 10,000 or so able-bodied male inhabitants. Guy Le Bouteillier installed himself in the citadel with part of the garrison. The rest were assigned to sectors of the city, each corresponding to one of the gates and each with its own commander. A mounted reserve was created to go to the aid of any sector in difficulties.[6]



12 The siege of Rouen, July 1418–January 1419

Henry V set up his headquarters in an abandoned Carthusian monastery by the Paris road, about half a mile east of the walls. At the outset a number of critical decisions were made. The King decided not to attempt an assault. Given the number of the defenders and the density of the streets and lanes within the walls it would have been a costly and uncertain business. He also seems to have resolved to make only limited use of his artillery. Although cannon were sited in front of all the gates and the city walls were overlooked on the north and east by high ground offering ideal vantage points, there is no evidence in any contemporary account of the siege of the kind of heavy artillery bombardment which the English had employed at Harfleur, Caen or Falaise, and no evidence of major damage to the city. The reason for this apparently surprising omission was that Henry wanted Rouen as much for its political as its military value. He intended it to serve as the capital of an English duchy of Normandy. The destruction of its walls and public buildings would have undermined this scheme and weakened the city in the face of a French counter-attack. So the English planned to starve the city into submission instead. Its sheer size made it vulnerable to famine. The harvest was not yet in. Too late, the municipal authorities had ordered every citizen to lay in supplies for ten months. The effect was simply to create a run on the shops and markets. An attempt had been made to reduce the numbers of ‘useless mouths’ by ordering out the old and infirm, the poor, and some of the women and clergy. But the response had been patchy and the magistrates’ efforts were largely frustrated by the great tide of refugees flooding into the city from the suburbs and

surrounding country.[7]

In the first few days after his arrival Henry set up a tight blockade. Working under the guns of the defenders and suffering heavy casualties from sorties, his men dug a deep trench and a bank the whole way round the walls on the landward side. The siege operations, like the defence, were divided into sectors corresponding to the gates of the city. The King himself took command of the eastern sector in front of the Porte Saint-Hilaire. The Earl of Salisbury occupied the marshy ground between the King's sector and the river outside the Porte Martinville. The Duke of Clarence was posted in the ruins of the abbey of St Gervais on the west. The Duke of Exeter guarded the northern sector and Sir Thomas Mowbray and Sir John Cornwall were encamped outside the citadel. Access to the city by water was completely blocked. A large force commanded by the Earl of Huntingdon stood on the south bank opposite the quays of the city. The fort at the south end of the bridge was surrounded. Heavy chains were stretched across the river upstream and down and a timber bridge was constructed a short distance away. Barges filled with soldiers patrolled the stream on both sides. Eighty miles downstream where the Seine flowed into the sea, a fleet of galleys supplied by the King of Portugal blockaded the river mouth.[8]

The first priority for the English after they had completed the blockade of Rouen was to secure their own communications. The English had an unhappy experience of major sieges. The few that they had undertaken in the previous century, at Tournai (1340), Rennes (1356), Reims (1359) and Nantes (1381–2) had all had to be abandoned because they could not feed their army. The lesson had been learned by 1418. A large-scale victualling operation was organised. This involved shipping supplies from southern England into Harfleur, which was turned into a great depot for the storage of supplies for the army. From there victuals were trans-shipped onto barges to be carried up the Seine.

The French held two garrisoned towns on the north bank of the Seine, at Quillebeuf and Caudebec, where they had stationed armed ships to block the passage of the river. These places had to be reduced if the English army was not to starve. Quillebeuf was besieged shortly after the investment of the city. Its garrison was annihilated in a battle beneath the walls on 16 August. But Caudebec proved to be tougher. The Earl of Warwick, who had recently arrived with his company from Domfront, was sent to deal with it. The place held out valiantly while no fewer than 100 victualling barges were held up in the Seine waiting to pass its walls. Eventually an English herald went into the town and

negotiated an agreement with its defenders. They undertook to surrender if and when Rouen was captured. In the meantime they would allow free passage to English shipping travelling between Rouen and the sea. Upstream of the city the main problem was the occupation of the Mont Sainte-Catherine by a large French garrison based in the fortified monastery at the summit. Possession of this great hill east of the city was vital to the English in order to secure their communications with Pont-de-l'Arche and to protect their rear from any relief force approaching from the east. The garrison of the monastery successfully beat off a determined night attack in the first few days of the siege. But they had limited stocks of food, and after holding out for a month they were finally forced to surrender on 1 September.[9]

By October 1418 the English army was securely established around Rouen. The whole of the lower reach of the Seine was under their control. The harvest had been brought in. Armed foraging expeditions were returning daily with supplies. Large markets had been set up at the edge of their encampments which were constantly restocked. Only the quiescence of the French enabled the English King to conduct a siege on this scale and supply his army across 120 miles of sea and eighty miles of enemy territory, something which no previous English commander in France had achieved. As the haberdasher Henry Gloming remarked on returning to England, a determined French attack on Henry V's lines 'wolde breke his sege and make hem of Roon dokke hys tayle'. The council, to whom the conversation was reported, disliked people who spread despondency and objected to the idea that the King owed anything to luck. They committed Gloming to the Flete prison. But the truth must have been as obvious to the English as it was to everyone else. Inside the beleaguered city food was rapidly running out. The shops and markets were bare. Stocks changed hands only in private and at exorbitant prices. The Rouennais began to fear that they had been abandoned. From the end of August onwards they addressed increasingly desperate appeals for help to the Duke of Burgundy, to his councillors, to the city of Paris, the University, even to the Dauphin.[10]

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Reporting on sentiment in the capital at the beginning of September, the University told the Rouennais that everyone realised that if their city held out there was some prospect of recovering Lower Normandy from the English, whereas if it fell the whole province would be permanently lost and the rest of France in grave peril. The Duke of Burgundy was under no illusions about this. He

was now the real head of government. His officers were conducting the defence of the city. His son had given the Rouennais solemn undertakings that they would be rescued if they were attacked. But his government had inherited many of the problems of the Armagnacs along with their capital. John received the appeals of Rouen with 'good and gracious words' but his resources of money and men were fully committed to fighting off the Armagnacs around Paris. It was clear that if Rouen was to be relieved there would have to be close cooperation between the Dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy. But the Dauphin's councillors had no interest in helping the Duke to bear his burden. The Rouennais were no friends of theirs, they said. Charles moved his headquarters at the end of July 1418 to the immense fortress of Chinon in Touraine and began to recruit substantial numbers of troops. But his objective was the recovery of Tours and other strongholds in Touraine from their Burgundian garrisons. It was not the relief of Rouen.[11]

Shortly after his flight from Paris the Dauphin had summoned a great council of his party to advise him how to put an end to the civil war. It met at the beginning of August 1418 at Chinon. Most of those present were anxious to find some compromise which would enable the Dauphin to cooperate with the Duke of Burgundy. They included the mediator of La Tombe John of Brittany, his ward the eleven-year-old John Duke of Alençon and Yolande of Aragon, the regent for her young son Louis of Anjou. Their lands were all on the marches of the English conquests in Normandy. They had the strongest personal interest in uniting the factions against Henry V. Against his better judgment as he later thought, the Dauphin allowed them to push him into agreeing to participate in a peace conference with the Queen and the Duke of Burgundy. The assembly agreed upon a set of proposals to be made to the Duke. They were recorded in a memorandum prepared by the Dauphin's councillors. But his councillors were hostile to the whole idea of the conference and their hostility is reflected in its terms. What the document proposed was an informal partition of France between the Dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy. Each of them was to withdraw his garrisons from places outside his own domains and concentrate his resources on the defeat of the invader. But they were to operate separately against the English. The Duke of Burgundy would conduct military operations north of the Seine with the revenues and manpower of the north, while the Dauphin conducted his own distinct operations in Lower Normandy and the march of Aquitaine, drawing on the resources of the centre and south. Each of them was to act through his own council. The only element of coordination was that each man's council would include a number of men

nominated by the other. These were extraordinary proposals in both military and political terms. They had been carefully framed so as to keep the Dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy apart, by people whose main concern was to avoid exposing the young prince to the influence of his mother and her Burgundian allies. The proposed division of effort would have required John the Fearless to confront the army of Henry V outside Rouen with only half the resources of France.[12]

The peace conference convened to discuss these proposals opened on 5 September 1418 at Corbeil, south-east of Paris. John of Brittany acted as mediator as he had done at La Tombe. After a fortnight moving from place to place to avoid the smallpox spreading through the Île de France, John V eventually established himself in the venerable Benedictine monastery of Saint-Maur-les-Fossés near Vincennes. The Dauphin was represented by the Archbishop of Tours Jacques Gélu and by Robert de Braquemont, who had now joined the Dauphin's council after the debacle of his Norman lieutenancy. After ten days of negotiation an agreement in principle was reached on 16 September 1418 at a crowded plenary session in the castle of Vincennes attended by the Dauphin's ambassadors and all the principals on the government side. The essential points were that the Dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy would both withdraw their garrisons from all walled places outside their own domains. The Dauphin would then rejoin the royal council and make common cause with the Duke of Burgundy against the English. The agreement was vague about the future shape of the government, but it was agreed that the Dauphin and the Duke would each have the right to nominate one of the three *généraux des finances* and that all other appointments would be made by the King on the advice of a council on which the Dauphin, the Queen and all the princes would be represented. Later that day the agreement was formally ratified on behalf of the King at the abbey of Saint-Maur in the presence of an impressive crowd which included the Duke of Burgundy and the Queen, the two papal legates and the representatives of the princely houses of France, Yolande of Aragon Duchess of Anjou and her young son, the Duke of Orléans' brother Philip Count of Vertus, the Duke of Bourbon's son Charles and the young Count of Alençon. All of them swore to observe it. As soon as the King's seal was on the document the government set about recruiting an army to relieve Rouen with the combined strength of the Dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy. The *arrière-ban* was proclaimed across France and the muster of the King's army fixed for 15 October. Troops from eastern France were summoned to join the Duke of Burgundy in Paris while recruits from the rest of France

were ordered to gather at Beauvais. The rabble-rousing Carmelite Eustache de Pavilly, who had made the cause of Rouen his own, toured the northern towns preaching the cause and drumming up recruits.[13]

All of these plans were thrown into disarray when the Dauphin unexpectedly refused to ratify the peace or to take any part in military operations against the English. At the time the responsibility for these decisions was laid at the door of his councillors. The Burgundians blamed three men in particular: Robert le Maçon, Jean Louvet and Raymond Raguier. The concerns of these men are easy to understand. The treaty departed from the essential point of the memorandum drawn up at Chinon. By providing for the Dauphin to return to the feverishly partisan atmosphere of the royal court it would remove the impressionable youth from the influence of the strong-willed men who had surrounded him for the past year and place him in the orbit of the Queen and the Duke of Burgundy. The Dauphin was the Armagnacs' ticket to power and they were not ready to give him up. It is easy to accuse these men of sinking any hope of civil peace in order to protect their jobs and their power. Plenty of people said this at the time. But the Dauphin's councillors were not alone. Behind them stood many thousands of more modest men who regarded John the Fearless as a usurper, a tyrant, a demagogue and a murderer, and could not bring themselves to deal with him. Some of these men were moved by tribal loyalties that had become ingrained over the past decade. They included the many retainers of the houses of Orléans, Anjou and Alençon.

But the most committed opponents of an accommodation with John the Fearless came from the civil service and the judiciary. The Burgundian proscriptions of 1413, followed by the Armagnac proscriptions of the next five years, had polarised the powerful public service. The Queen and John the Fearless had filled their administration at Chartres and Troyes with men who had been dispossessed and expelled from Paris by the Armagnacs. Now the boot was on the other foot. John the Fearless had replaced forty-two judges of the Parlement and twenty-five officers of the Chambre des Comptes within days of his return to Paris, not to speak of many hundreds of humbler functionaries. The renewed cycle of dismissals propelled a large and embittered class of ruined professional administrators into the Dauphin's camp. The breach was completed by the mass confiscations of property which followed. In Paris those who fled the city were presumed to be traitors to the King and all their land and movable property were seized by special commissions. The Burgundians proceeded to make new enemies

among men who had had only tenuous connections with the Armagnac party. Many of them had only fled for fear of mob violence, or because they had been thrown out of their jobs to make room for the newcomers, or simply because they had been prominent men owning handsome mansions which other people coveted. Jean Jouvenel des Ursins, who had been president of the commission charged with the administration of the *aides*, had got on well enough with John the Fearless in happier times. He had left Paris in the early hours of 29 May to escape the mob and arrived in the Loire valley with his wife, eleven children and three grandchildren and only the clothes they stood up in. He had lost a good salary, a fine mansion in Paris, a country retreat in the Île de France and valuable estates in Champagne and Brie. During the brief truce which followed the proclamation of the treaty of Saint-Maur men like him were joined by a steady stream of other well-to-do officials, judges, accountants, clergy and scholars who came out of hiding in the cellars and attics of Paris and fled the city while they could, leaving almost all they owned behind. They became lifelong enemies of the Duke of Burgundy.[14]

On 21 September 1418, five days after the agreement at Saint-Maur, the Dauphin issued a series of ordinances from the town of Niort in northern Poitou which marked a point of no return. Using his powers as royal lieutenant, he set up his own rival administration, just as John the Fearless had done at Chartres and Troyes. The King, he declared, was no longer his own master. The Duke of Burgundy had usurped his authority. He had taken over Paris by force, ratified the massacres of June and August and filled the Parlement and the administration with stooges, incompetents and traitors. The Dauphin created a new royal chancery based at Poitiers under the direction of Robert le Maçon. Declaring that 'there was no real Parlement in Paris', he transferred the institution to Poitiers, placing Jean de Vailly at its head and filling it with refugees from Paris. Thereafter there were two chanceries and two *parlements*, each claiming to act in the name of the King. Officials across France received orders from each side not to comply with the orders of the other. The consequences were disastrous. The ordinances of Niort ensured that as long as Charles VI lived France would be geographically divided into two hostile zones, each with its own government, neither of them strong enough to overcome the other or defeat the English. It also meant, as Jean Jouvenel had predicted years before, that each government would bid against the other for the support of the English, who would emerge as the decisive force in French politics. This process began as soon as the ordinances of Niort had been sealed. Before the end of September

the Dauphin's councillors approached Henry V and asked for talks with a view to a military alliance against John the Fearless. In return they were willing to cede a large part of western France to the invader.[15]

The news of the ordinances had not yet reached Paris on 22 September when the Duke of Brittany left to obtain the Dauphin's ratification of the treaty of Saint-Maur. John V brought with him delegations representing the King, the Duke of Burgundy, the other princely houses of France and the city of Paris. As a gesture of reconciliation he also brought the Dauphin's fourteen-year-old fiancée Marie of Anjou, who had been stranded in the Hôtel de Bourbon in Paris since his flight. The great cortège of dignitaries made their way slowly along the Loire valley and early in October arrived at Saumur. There they waited in vain for the Dauphin to appear. He was away in southern Poitou and showed no sign of returning. Access to him was reported to be strictly controlled. His councillors were not going to be caught out again as they had been at Chinon in August. John V tried to arrange a meeting but they would not hear of it. Eventually the Archbishop of Tours, Jacques Gélu, who had played the leading role in negotiating the treaty, arrived with the news that it would not be ratified. It seems unlikely that he gave John of Brittany the implausible explanation that his master was giving to everyone else. According to Charles the treaty was a charade, a trick. His ambassadors never agreed it. They had been 'neither invited not heard' at the principal session of the conference and had been absent from the gathering at Vincennes when it had been concluded. The first that they had heard about it was when the Dukes of Burgundy and Brittany had proclaimed it publicly as a done deal. By the time that John V and his fellow delegates returned to Paris to report the failure of their mission the Burgundian council had learned of the Dauphin's approach to Henry V. They issued an ordinance in the King's name stripping him of his lieutenancy and revoking all his powers.[16]

On 27 October 1418 four emissaries of Rouen appeared before the council in Paris. They brought Eustache de Pavilly with them to plead their cause. In a long and theatrical speech, interrupted by frequent heaving and sobbing, the elderly friar described the conditions in the city. The defenders, he said, had exhausted their supplies of food by the beginning of October. Since then they had been reduced to eating horses, cats, dogs and rats. The city would fall unless relief came quickly. The collapse of the rest of Normandy was bound to follow. The province had been loyal to the Crown for two centuries. Its taxes represented a large part of the royal treasury's receipts. Was the council really willing to risk such a

disaster? The orator concluded with a peroration directed personally at the Duke of Burgundy ('you who have taken over the government of the King and the kingdom'). If the Rouennais were forced to submit to the King of England, he said, John 'would have no bitterer enemies in the world and they would not rest until they had destroyed him and all his issue'. On the streets of Paris the fate of Rouen aroused high emotion. People were already beginning to murmur about the Duke's apparent inaction. Under heavy pressure to do something, the government did the only thing it could do. It decided to press on with the attempt to relieve Rouen, even without the Dauphin's cooperation. The plan was to leave 500 professional troops in the capital to keep order in the city and on the roads around. All the other available troops would be concentrated against the English in Normandy. In Rouen the news was received with a great outburst of joy. From their encampments around the walls the English could hear all the church bells of the city ringing.[17]

Unfortunately for the Rouennais the celebrations were premature. The response to the government's summonses was very disappointing. In the centre and south, where most of the *baillis* were loyal to the Dauphin, the royal summons was ignored. A large number of the Duke of Burgundy's own retainers were tied down in garrison duties or in the debilitating struggle with the Dauphin's partisans on the southern marches of Burgundy. On 15 October 1418, the day appointed for the muster, hardly anyone appeared. The contingents of the two Burgundies and Champagne did not arrive in Paris until November and then in less than half the numbers of the previous year. The other muster at Beauvais seems to have been a complete failure. The *arrière-ban* was proclaimed for a second time in November with no better results. On 10 November 1418 the King was taken with much ceremony to Saint-Denis to receive the *Oriflamme*, but as yet the promised army of relief hardly existed.[18]

The hot and cold attitude of the Duke may have been one reason. Another was that men were afraid to leave their homes undefended for fear of the Dauphinist garrisons of the Marne and the Oise. But the major factor is likely to have been the royal government's financial difficulties. Since he had begun his march on Paris in August 1417 John the Fearless had funded his wars in France from the revenues of his own domains, from borrowing on his own credit and from voluntary grants by towns which had declared for him. But once he had taken control of the machinery of government in Paris virtually the whole cost of warfare was transferred to the bankrupt royal treasury. Not only were payments from the receivers

of Flanders and the two Burgundies for war purposes reduced to a trickle but a large part of the King's revenues was transferred into John's personal coffers by way of reimbursement of past war expenditure. In normal times the answer would have been to resort to taxation. But the Duke had won the support of Paris and the northern towns with improvident promises to bring an end to war taxation. These promises severely limited his room for manoeuvre. A special tax was imposed on wine throughout France, an *aide* in all but name. It was extremely unpopular and proved to be impossible to collect except in Paris. Some revenue was still coming in from the Île de France, Picardy and Beauvaisis. But collection had virtually ceased everywhere else. The main resource of the government was now coinage manipulation, a highly unpopular form of stealth taxation inherited from the regime of the Count of Armagnac. The value of its minting profits, however, was much reduced by the civil war and the struggle with Henry V. Of the twenty-four royal mints, the government in Paris directly controlled only three: Paris, Saint-Quentin and Tournai. Most of the profits of the Paris mint were assigned to the defence of the city against the surrounding Dauphinist garrisons. The other two had been farmed out for ready cash to a syndicate of financiers earlier in the year. The Duke of Burgundy had appropriated the four royal mints in Burgundy and Champagne and about half of the considerable profits of these mints went on war expenditure. But the lion's share of that was consumed by operations against the Dauphinists leaving little or nothing to fund the war against the English. The other mints were in the process of being taken over by the officers of the Dauphin or the King of England. 'Our ills are beyond remedy', the University of Paris wailed to anyone who would listen, 'and the kingdom is heading for disaster.'[19]

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On the morning of 10 November 1418, the day that the French King went to Saint-Denis, the Earl of Salisbury received the ambassadors of the Dauphin in the castle of Alençon. The English King was well-informed about the divisions of his enemies and had given much thought to the best way of exploiting them. In preparation for the conference with the Dauphin's representatives he had a long and candid memorandum prepared for his council at Westminster, which gives a unique insight into his mind at a critical point of his enterprise. The author was probably Philip Morgan, Henry's newly appointed Chancellor of Normandy and the ablest of the Chancery clerks who were with him in France. It is clear from this document that Henry thought that his position in France was much more

precarious than it seemed to others. The fundamental problem was financial. Henry had been voted another double subsidy by Parliament in December 1417. The second part of the subsidy, which had been largely anticipated by borrowing and assignment, was due to be paid in February 1419. This would bring the number of standard subsidies which Henry had received to seven in five years. He was well aware that this level of taxation could not be maintained for much longer. The resources of England were not equal to the task of conquering the whole of France or even defending his conquests in Normandy. But it was far from clear what the alternatives were. One possibility was to tax Normandy for the cost of keeping it. Another was to allow the English army to live off the land. But both of these options carried a heavy political cost. Henry needed the support of the indigenous population and could not afford to provoke 'general grouching'. No one of real stature in the conquered regions had submitted to him and very few gentlemen, as the author of the memorandum admitted. Even those who had submitted were 'full unstable, and is no wonder'. For these reasons, 'with more that were long to write as well,' the King had to have a settlement soon.

The great question was with whom. Henry V had traditionally supported an alliance with the house of Burgundy. But by 1418 he and his advisers had concluded that a treaty with the Dauphin was the better option. In the first place it seemed to be attainable. The Dauphin and his supporters badly needed English help. They had been willing to trade territory for armed support at another crisis in their affairs in 1412, whereas when it came to the point John the Fearless had never gone that far. An Anglo-Dauphinist alliance would probably be strong enough to defeat the Burgundians, whereas it was unlikely that an Anglo-Burgundian alliance could conquer the extensive territories which the Dauphin controlled south of the Loire. At least as important was the fact that the Dauphin was in a better position than his rival to give Henry what he wanted, for only he could deliver Aquitaine. He would no doubt be willing to cede Normandy in order to get Paris. He might even be prepared to share the spoils of the fall of the house of Burgundy with Henry, ceding Flanders to England. It is the business of diplomats to count their chickens before they are hatched. But these proposals raised some tricky questions. One of them was Henry V's claim to the French throne, a perennially awkward problem in English diplomacy. It had never been a primary war aim. But it would be discreditable to abandon it formally after all the emphasis that it had received in English propaganda. This might perhaps be avoided if the treaty took the form of a long truce instead of a

permanent peace. Even more problematical was the question of authority on the French side. A treaty with the Dauphin would probably not be binding on the French crown. Henry's advisers regarded the Dauphin's claim to the regency of France as distinctly shaky. Legally they thought that Isabelle of Bavaria had a better title. They would therefore have to ensure that the lost provinces of Aquitaine, or at least some critical places such as La Rochelle, were formally handed over before the Dauphin recovered control of the French King. It would be difficult enough to persuade him to agree to this in advance, but probably impossible to do so later. Then there was the question of the Dukes of Orléans and Bourbon and the other notable prisoners of war in England. If they were allowed to ransom themselves they would return to become powerful figures in post-war France. Their hostility would be dangerous. Their consent to any treaty was therefore indispensable. But would it be forthcoming?[20]

When the Alençon conference opened the Earl of Salisbury was flanked by the King's Steward Sir Walter Hungerford, John lord Grey of Codnor and Philip Morgan. Opposite them sat a delegation of hardened Dauphinist partisans. Jean de Norry, who acted as spokesman, called himself Archbishop of Sens although he had in fact been elected only by the Armagnac faction in the cathedral chapter and was never consecrated. He resented the whole idea of haggling with the invaders and at one point likened their representatives to the Devil. With him sat the Duke of Burgundy's intemperate old enemies Louis de Chalon Count of Tonnerre, Jean de Vailly the First President of the Dauphin's new Parlement, and Robert de Braquemont the Dauphinist Admiral of France. Braquemont's son had recently been captured by the English and sent to join other politically significant prisoners in the Tower of London. He cannot have felt much better about the occasion than Norry did.

The negotiations were awkward from the start. They were punctuated by repeated wrangling about procedure. The two sides argued about their powers; about who should begin; about the order in which the issues should be discussed; about that old bone of contention, whether the proceedings should be in Latin or French. There were long sulky silences, in which the two sides glared at each other both refusing to speak. Once they got down to the substance of the matter a measure of common ground emerged. But the exchanges were ill-tempered throughout and were not helped by the acerbic manner of both the principal spokesmen. The English delegates made it clear that they would not consider anything less than the territories ceded by the 'Great Peace' of 1360 plus

Normandy. The Brétigny territories, they pointed out, had already been offered to them by the Armagnac princes in 1412 and in 1415 and Normandy was theirs by right of conquest. The question was how much more the Dauphin was willing to offer in return for armed support against the Duke of Burgundy. The opening demand of the English was for Touraine, Anjou, Maine, Flanders and the old domains of Henry of Lancaster in Champagne. After much bluffing the French admitted that they were authorised to concede the Brétigny territories and the whole of Normandy with the important exception of the city and *bailliage* of Rouen. They were also willing to discuss the sharing out of the Duke of Burgundy's domains in Flanders and Artois once they were conquered. This offer, which was in fact not far from the English side's expectations, they professed to regard as 'void, useless and virtually null'. But the English declined to give any indication of their irreducible minimum.

The Dauphin was evidently dismayed by his ambassadors' interim report, which reached him after the first week. He wrote a personal letter to Henry V to ask him to be more reasonable. Peace was surely possible if the two of them combined to confront the 'horrible evil, cruelty and deceit of the Duke of Burgundy against the nobility and monarchy of France from which you are yourself descended'. By the time this missive was received more fundamental difficulties had arisen. The main one was the feudal status of the ceded territories, the issue which had bedevilled every previous Anglo-French conference since the 1340s. Philip Morgan put the question directly. Was the Dauphin offering to cede the Brétigny provinces and Normandy in full sovereignty or were Henry and his descendants to hold them as vassals of the Kings of France? Norry ought to have been ready for this question, but he was not. He deferred his answer until the following day and when it came it was no answer. It was a difficult question, he said. He would prefer to discuss other matters first. He had gone as far as his instructions would allow. The matter would be better thrashed out at a personal meeting with the Dauphin. He assumed that Henry V, as a just man, would be willing to hold them on the same basis as his forebears. Philip Morgan's reply was uncompromising. As rightful King of France he had no reason to accept any superior but God in those parts of France that he held. This provoked uproar. The delegates of both sides rose from their seats and, all talking at once, rehearsed all the old arguments.

Shouting above the hubbub the English put the question. If the negotiations continued was there any prospect of the Dauphin accepting Henry's demand for full sovereignty? The French,

according to the English record, seemed to have 'some difficulty' in answering, but eventually said that they thought that there was. Would the Dauphin be in a position to deliver, Morgan asked, bearing in mind that he was a minor and that his father was still alive? There followed a long argument about the Dauphin's powers, the extent of the territory under his control and the amount of support which he enjoyed among the French princes. It seemed, said Norry in conclusion, that there was little prospect of agreement. Their safe-conducts were about to expire and they saw no point in continuing. The final session was held on the following day, 24 November. The French proposed a short truce until February 1419 for further discussions. Only if they put all their proposals in writing, said Morgan; but unless they had something better to offer than he had heard so far there would be no point. Thereupon the Dauphin's ambassadors got up and walked out.[21]

The English King was unconcerned. His bargaining power was bound to increase over the following weeks as the noose tightened around Rouen. Henry maintained just enough contact with the Dauphin's court to avoid a final breakdown. He replied to the Dauphin's letter with a suggestion that discussions should be resumed once Rouen had fallen. He received the Dauphin's ambassador Louis de Chalon at his headquarters within days of his departure from Alençon, and suggested that another Dauphinist embassy should be sent to confer with him in person. Meanwhile he had already turned to the Burgundians to find out what they were willing to offer. Guillaume de Champdivers, the usual intermediary between John the Fearless and the English King, had visited his headquarters to lay the ground. Another conference had been set up for December to hear the proposals of the Burgundian side.[22]

Outside the beleaguered city Henry V was preparing for battle with the Duke of Burgundy's relief army. The garrisons of Lower Normandy had been stripped to the bone to increase his numbers. The long siege of Cherbourg had finally come to an end when the Duke of Gloucester's miners succeeded in undermining a section of the walls. The starving garrison surrendered at the end of September, releasing several hundred troops to join the King at Rouen. More men arrived from England and 500 from Ireland, whose wild appearance, primitive-looking weapons and diminutive ponies astonished the defenders of the city. The English were digging themselves in. They cut trenches across the approaches from Paris and armed them with palisades, timber towers and artillery. They stationed men in the forests east of Rouen to stop the enemy from approaching unseen. They sent spies to watch the progress of the Duke of Burgundy in the Île de France.[23]

On 24 November 1418 John the Fearless had about 4,000 troops in Paris according to English reports. Unable to feed them there and perhaps afraid of provoking riots among the citizens, he led them out of the city, accompanied by the Queen, and encamped twenty miles away outside Pontoise. The sick King was brought along in Isabelle's baggage train for fear that others might take control of him in her absence. They remained at Pontoise for five weeks while John the Fearless addressed urgent appeals in the King's name to the councillors in Paris to find reinforcements, to the treasurers to find money and to the defenders of Rouen to hold out against increasingly hopeless odds. They were offered mendacious promises of imminent relief which were read out in the market-place of Rouen. All the time the Dauphinist offensive continued unabated in the Duke's rear. Their garrisons around Paris raided up to the suburbs and across the Île de France, frustrating all attempts to bring victuals to the troops encamped at Pontoise. Further south the Dauphin took advantage of the Duke of Burgundy's preoccupations to march on Tours and lay siege to the only surviving Burgundian garrison in the Loire valley.[24]

From Pontoise Philippe de Morvilliers and other Burgundian councillors, accompanied by the papal legate Cardinal Orsini, rode ahead towards Rouen to confer with the English. They clung to the hope of some negotiated solution that might save the Duke from the humiliation of losing France's second city without striking a blow for its defence. Henry V's delegates met them at Pont-de-l'Arche. Theirs were familiar faces. Richard Beauchamp Earl of Warwick was a veteran of earlier negotiations with the Burgundians going back to 1411, 'a man of impressive bearing, exceptional judgment and great military experience, with a practised and accomplished eloquence on any subject,' wrote an admiring contemporary. With him sat Henry's steward Sir Walter Hungerford and the abrasive Philip Morgan, both of whom who had also been at the conference with the Dauphinists at Alençon, and Morgan's fellow Welshman the lawyer Henry Ware. Henry V had no desire to hurry things along before Rouen fell. The talks were stalled for several days by another argument about the use of French, a language which the English King claimed that his commissioners 'cannot write and hardly speak or understand'. This may have been true of some of them although Warwick certainly spoke excellent French. The discussions eventually proceeded in a mixture of English and French with documents being translated into Latin. But the message was no more palatable for being understood. The English expressed interest in a marriage alliance. Henry V declared himself to be delighted by the portrait of Catherine of France which was brought to him by the

cardinal. But he wanted a dowry of a million *écus* along with the provinces of the south-west ceded at Brétigny plus Normandy, all to be held in full sovereignty. Unlike the Dauphin's men, who had been willing to concede very similar territorial demands and even contemplated the possibility of giving way on sovereignty, the Burgundians dismissed the English claims out of hand. The King was incapacitated, they said. The Duke had no authority to alienate his heritage. About ten days before Christmas the conference broke up. The cardinal returned to Pontoise to report the failure of his mission. Then he gave up his peace mission as a lost cause and left for Italy.[25]

Inside Rouen the defenders were reduced to the last extremes of privation and distress. People were eating roots and vermin. Cats were reported to be changing hands at 18 *blancs* and a quarter of a horse at 100 *sous*. No grain was to be had at all. By Christmas about 200 people a day were dying of starvation. Their bodies were thrown into great open grave-pits in the cemetery of St Mary Magdalen and then, when it was full, piled up in the streets. Disease began to spread through the city. Order broke down. People fought in the streets over morsels of food. The captain of the garrison turned to desperate measures. He organised a suicidal sortie from several gates at once with all the forces that could be spared, apparently with the intention of breaking through the English lines. At one of the gates the drawbridge collapsed beneath the weight of the horsemen, propelling them into the ditch. The rest were thrown back from the English siege lines with heavy losses. Shortly before Christmas the defenders rounded up several thousand 'useless mouths', mostly women and children and the poor and indigent, and pushed them out of the gates, hoping to save food and cast upon the English the moral responsibility for feeding them. But the English drove the wretches back with volleys of arrows, forcing them to cower in the ditch beneath the walls where many of them died of starvation or exposure.[26]

The Duke of Burgundy's army had by now exhausted the supplies available around Pontoise. After the failure of the negotiations at Pont-de-l'Arche John the Fearless decided to lead his troops north to the Beauvaisis where the rest of the army was supposed to muster at the end of December. The new plan was to march on Rouen from the east in the new year while another force approached to reprovision the city by water from the west. The Burgundian Admiral of France Charles of Lens was sent with a team of men to requisition ships along the coast of Picardy. They planned to load the holds with food and fill the decks with men-at-arms and archers and then force their way up the Seine and past the English siege

works. A final appeal for support was sent to the Dauphin. He not only rejected it but forbade all those of his allegiance to join the army of relief. As a result none of the military nobility of France appeared at Beauvais except for the Duke's own subjects and retainers in Picardy and Artois.

On 29 December the Duke of Burgundy entered Beauvais with the troops who had been with him at Pontoise. The rest of his army was waiting for him outside the town but in pitifully small numbers. John had a series of fraught meetings with his principal captains. In the midst of the discussions a delegation from Rouen appeared. They had made their way through the English lines at great risk to themselves with up-to-date reports of conditions in the city and an ultimatum. This was the last appeal that they would make to him for protection, they declared. Unless the city was relieved in a matter of days they would renounce their allegiance and submit to the King of England. John the Fearless was embarrassed and apologetic. To his infinite dismay, he told them, he did not yet have the strength to relieve Rouen. But before long, he said, reinforcements would arrive and the position would change. They asked him how long. By 8 January, he replied. The delegates of Rouen left to report back to the defenders of the city. But it soon became clear that the Duke had been too sanguine. Shortly after the men of Rouen had left a runner reached Beauvais with the news that the Dauphin had captured Tours. This was followed by persistent reports that he was marching on the bridge-town of La Charité-sur-Loire and threatening to invade the Nivernais and Burgundy. In the new year John was closeted with most of the senior officers of the financial departments from Paris. Their reports were dismal. On about 3 January 1419 he decided to abandon the relief of Rouen. The English were too strong, the Dauphin too threatening, the treasury empty. So the Duke of Burgundy disbanded his army and sent a runner to Rouen with a secret message advising the townsmen to sue for the best terms they could get.[27]

By the time that this message reached the defenders of Rouen they had already given up hope and decided for themselves to negotiate with the besiegers. Late on 31 December 1418 a knight of the garrison appeared at the land gate at the southern end of the Seine bridge and called for a knight or baron to come forward from the English lines. The Yorkshire knight Sir Gilbert Umfraville appeared. They asked him to arrange for a delegation of twelve men to come before the King. The meeting took place on New Year's Day at the Charterhouse by the Paris road. The Frenchmen began by trying to get relief to the wretched people in the ditch beneath the

walls. ‘Fellows, who put them there?’ Henry answered. Then they asked to be allowed to negotiate a conditional surrender. They had been charged to defend the city by the King of France whose subjects they were, they said. They were willing to become subjects of the King of England but would need to give due notice to the Duke of Burgundy. Henry, in his most uncompromising mood, told them that their city was his by rights and they had kept him out of it. The Duke of Burgundy was well aware of the situation and had no need of more messages. They would have to choose between death or unconditional surrender.

There was a large element of ritual and theatre about such occasions. In fact these brutal exchanges were the prelude to a long and painful negotiation about the terms of surrender. On the following morning two large pavilions were erected outside the Porte Saint-Hilaire. There the abbot of the Norman abbey of Saint-Georges de Boscherville and an official of the cathedral, supported by twenty-two representatives of the garrison and citizens, haggled for two weeks with a commission led by the Earls of Warwick and Salisbury. The townsmen crowded onto the walls to watch. The English soldiers stood about in groups in no-man’s-land as the heralds of both sides, ‘dressed like lords’ in coats of arms and gold braid, passed from tent to tent with messages. Henry’s terms were bleak, and after a week he threatened to bring the talks to an end unless they were accepted. Inside the city a bitter dispute was in progress between the professional garrison, who were determined to hold out for terms that would salve their honour, and the mass of the population, who wanted to bring an end to the siege at any price. The garrison was blamed for the failure of the defence. Guy Le Bouteillier was even accused of having sabotaged the recent catastrophic sortie from the gates. A tempestuous meeting at the *hôtel de ville* broke up inconclusively, some declaring that they would rather die fighting than surrender while others plotted to kill the captains of the garrison unless they opened the gates. Eventually, on about 9 January 1419, the defenders resolved to demolish a large section of their walls and set fire to the city at several points unless the English King moderated his terms. Henry, who wanted to take the city intact, finally yielded. He appointed the Archbishop of Canterbury, Henry Chichele, who had recently arrived from England, to mediate with the clergy of the city. It was Chichele who finally reached agreement with the defenders on 13 January 1419.[28]

The terms were harsh although not as harsh as they might have been. The town and castle were to be surrendered intact on 19 January 1419 unless by noon on that day they had been relieved by

a French army commanded by Charles VI or the Duke of Burgundy in person. If the French army appeared the garrison and the inhabitants would have to witness the clash of arms from the walls without intervening. The remaining terms reflected Henry V's determination to revive the twelfth-century English duchy of Normandy. Before the surrender the 'useless mouths' in the city ditches were to be taken back and fed. The city was to be cleaned up and all corpses buried outside the walls. Once Henry had taken possession, the city would retain all the privileges granted to it in times past, whether by his forebears the dukes of Normandy or by the kings of France. The inhabitants might retain their property in Normandy but only if they were willing to enter the English King's allegiance. As for the garrison, non-Normans could depart under safe-conduct leaving nothing behind them, but native Normans had the choice of submission to their new master or imprisonment. The King exacted a heavy price for nearly six months of defiance by those whom he called his subjects. Rouen was to pay the largest indemnity ever exacted from a French city: 300,000 *écus*, the first instalment of which was to be handed over within three days of the surrender, the rest a month later. In addition all horses and war material were to be surrendered and the King was to be allowed a site of his choice in the city or its suburbs on which to build a palace. Eighty hostages were delivered up as security for the performance of these terms.[29]

The interval allowed for the French to relieve Rouen was a perfunctory formality. By the time the captain's messenger reached the Queen and the Duke of Burgundy they had already released their troops and left Beauvais. The Duke did not dare to show his face in Paris. He withdrew to Provins in Champagne until the spring, blaming the Dauphin for the disaster. For his part the Dauphin was not sorry to watch his rival's humiliation. On about 15 January 1419 his representatives arrived at Louviers and received a safe-conduct to come before Henry V at Rouen. They came with proposals for a summit meeting between Henry V and the Dauphin to resolve the issues which had been too delicate for their ambassadors to broach at Alençon. They must have been present in the English camp to witness the surrender of the city on the 19th. In the Charterhouse Guy Le Bouteillier, who had directed the defence of the city for the past year, knelt before Henry V and delivered up the keys. The King handed them to his uncle Thomas Beaufort Duke of Exeter, whom he had appointed captain of the town. Later in the afternoon the banner of St George was hoisted above the citadel. Almost all the indigenous population of the city swore the oath of allegiance to Henry V, as they had warned John the Fearless they

would. One of them was Guy Le Bouteillier himself, the first important layman to submit to the English King. He was to become one of the most loyal adjutants of the English government in Normandy.[30]

'If Rouen cannot defend itself what city can?' asked the masters of the University of Paris. The doomsayers who had predicted that the fall of Rouen would be followed by the collapse of resistance throughout Normandy were swiftly proved right. No one wished to suffer the fate of Caen or Rouen. The nagging fear that the French King's officers would return and punish them as traitors faded as the English occupation began to look as if it would endure. Caudebec surrendered automatically in accordance with the terms already agreed with the Earl of Warwick. The garrison of Montivilliers, the largest in the Pays de Caux, opened its gates to the English captain of Harfleur and marched away. The submission of these places was the signal for a wholesale desertion of the French cause. A number of task forces were detached from the English army and sent to overawe the regions which had not yet submitted. There was very little resistance in any of them. The seaports of the Pays de Caux, Fécamp, Dieppe and Eu, surrendered to the English one after the other in the month following the fall of Rouen. Honfleur, the last port of Normandy still holding out for Charles VI, was blockaded from land and sea by the Earl of Salisbury and entered into a conditional surrender agreement on 25 February. By the end of March all the walled places of the Seine were in English hands except for the fortress of La Roche-Guyon, dominating the river from its great man-made cliff at the edge of the Vexin, and Richard Coeur-de-Lion's mighty Château-Gaillard at Les Andelys. North of the Seine only Gisors still held out and south of it only Ivry. The English had already penetrated upriver into the Île de France. Vernon, Mantes and Meulan were abandoned by their garrisons as they approached for want of stores to withstand a siege. Abbeville, Beauvais and Pontoise became frontier towns. The English were within twenty miles of Paris. Their raiding parties penetrated as far as Saint-Cloud, within sight of the city walls. 'And now, blessed be God,' wrote an Englishman with the army to a friend in London, 'a man may ride from Brittany through the whole duchy of Normandy … and in a short time, I expect, all the way to Calais.'[31]

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After taking possession of Rouen, Henry V completed the arrangements for the government of the conquered territories which he had begun eighteen months earlier at Caen. By the spring of 1419 the territory under English occupation comprised the whole of

the duchy of Normandy together with Alençon, Perche and parts of the adjacent *bailliage* of Mantes, which were administered with Normandy and came to be known as the *pays de conquête.* There was a Chancellor of Normandy, initially Philip Morgan, who served as the chief executive of the English duchy and presided over a Grand Conseil charged with its administration and defence. English soldiers had been installed as *baillis* in all seven *bailliages* of the province and also at Mantes. The interim financial administration set up after the fall of Caen, for which Sir John Tiptoft had been responsible, was replaced by something more elaborate and permanent. William Allington, an experienced colonial administrator who in the course of his career had been responsible for the finances of Brest, Calais and Ireland, was brought in to serve as Treasurer and Receiver-General, based like the other financial departments at Caen. All of these exalted offices were held by Englishmen and with very few exceptions continued to be held by Englishmen throughout the thirty-year occupation of Normandy. English too were the captains of the twenty-two royal garrisons who provided the backbone of the province's defence and a reserve of manpower from which field armies could be drawn. However, for most Normans the face of government remained French. Beneath the *baillis* and the principal officers of the province the administration was almost entirely French. The *vicomtés* and *prévôtés* into which each *bailliage* was divided were administered by Frenchmen. Most of the personnel of the Chambre des Comptes at Caen were French, including its president, the Norman knight Louis Bourgeois. So were the local receivers who were placed in every district and the innumerable sergeants, prosecutors, surveyors and other functionaries.

Under the kings of France Normandy had been part of the royal demesne but had enjoyed a relatively high degree of autonomy. Much of the organisation that Henry V created there was directly modelled on the old system. English office-holders simply stepped into the shoes of their French predecessors and their French subordinates carried on as they always had. But there was also a conscious attempt on Henry's part to flatter the provincial patriotism of the Normans by presenting himself not as a conqueror but as the ruler of an independent duchy, the returning successor of the Angevins. The ancient office of Seneschal of Normandy, in abeyance since the eviction of the Angevin kings of England in 1204, was revived and its holder given authority over all fortified places. In another appeal to Norman particularism Henry summoned an assembly of the nobility of the province to Rouen to hear the further ordinances that he proposed to issue for the

government of their province. Over the following months the new ducal palace began to rise from its foundations overlooking the quays of the Seine in the south-west corner of the walled city, a visible sign of the King's commitment to the region.[32]

A fortnight after the surrender of Rouen, on 2 February 1419, Henry V appeared at the Candlemas celebrations there wearing the traditional robes of the dukes of Normandy to proclaim that all those who wished to have their title to land in Normandy recognised should present themselves promptly to his officers to swear oaths of allegiance. The proclamation was ordered to be read out in every town of Normandy *'par cry sollempnell a son de trompt'*. Four months later the *baillis* were ordered to take possession of all lands whose occupiers could not show letters patent from the King confirming that they had sworn. No one could move around the country without being challenged to produce his '*bullette*' certifying that he was 'the King's liege man, sworn in due form'. Land abandoned by its owners was presumed to belong to the King's enemies and was appropriated. It is impossible to assess even approximately how much land came into the King's hands in this way. Henry V had hoped that the entire population of Normandy would submit to his rule and he had initially been very cautious about granting out land to Englishmen at the expense of the indigenous population. However, as his advisers had ruefully admitted the previous autumn, few of the great men of the province had submitted. Ultimately this led to a change of policy and a major resettlement of land in Normandy.[33]

In the year following the fall of Rouen there were some 250 grants of fiefs as against about ninety the year before. The land of the greater lay proprietors who fled or refused to submit was generally granted out to loyal men, almost invariably English, in return for military service: the maintenance of a garrison, the defence of the surrounding region and the provision of a stated number of men-at-arms and archers for field service under the grantee's command for as long as the war lasted. These were onerous obligations. Fief-holders had to maintain a corps of men-at-arms and archers summer and winter, year in year out. To support these obligations the grants had to be very extensive. The greatest English captains received vast domains, together in some cases with territorial titles.

In the first grant of its kind, dating from February 1418, the King's brother the Duke of Clarence was given what amounted to a personal appanage comprising the viscounties of Auge and Orbec on either side of the valley of the Touques, to which was later added the adjoining viscounty of Pontaudemer. Subsequent grants were

even larger and generally heritable. The Earl of Salisbury, perhaps the most active English captain after Clarence, was created Count of Perche. The vast Norman holdings of the different branches of the Harcourt family were divided up and distributed to English noblemen. The Duke of Exeter received the county and title of John VII de Harcourt and his castle at Lillebonne; the Earl of Warwick acquired the county of Aumale, which had formerly belonged to Harcourt's son, now one of the principal councillors of the Dauphin; while his cousin Jacques d'Harcourt's county of Tancarville went to the Northumberland knight Sir John Gray. In all, five Norman counties were granted to English captains. A sixth was given to the Gascon knight Gaston de Grailly Captal de Buch, the younger brother of the Count of Foix, who became Count of Longueville. These grants represented a deliberate attempt to replace the higher nobility of Valois Normandy with a new Anglo-Norman aristocracy of service with an incentive to stay in Normandy and defend their conquests. At a humbler level grants might be made of a single estate or a modest lordship. At the end of 1419 there were already about sixty smaller castles in Normandy held by English soldiers in their own right in return for military service. The combined military obligation of the new fief-holders amounted to some 1,400 men. A year later there must have been many more. Henry seems to have hoped to control the sea-lanes of the Channel by similar means. The King's attempt after the capture of Harfleur in 1415 to 'stuffe the toun with English peple' may have met with only limited success, but this did not deter him from trying to colonise Caen, Cherbourg, Honfleur and other ports with Englishmen, drawn by offers of free land and houses.[34]

This large-scale transfer of land was accompanied by steps to entrench the dominant English position in the Norman countryside. Land granted in return for military service was usually inalienable. It was held either for life on terms that it would revert to the Crown on the grantee's death, or in tail male on terms that it would pass automatically to his male heirs. These provisions were supplemented by a general ordinance forbidding the sale of land in Normandy by Englishmen, regardless of the terms of tenure, except to other Englishmen. Title to lands granted by the King was a politically sensitive issue in Normandy. Disputes about it were removed from the jurisdiction of the ordinary courts and referred automatically to the King's council at Rouen. All of this reflected the King's expectation that the English presence in Normandy would be permanent. So far as one can judge most of his subjects thought so too. Within a year of the fall of Rouen Englishmen were buying houses and small estates with apparent confidence in the future.[35]

The creation of an English administration in Normandy opened up the prospect that at least part of the burden of paying his army could now be shifted to local revenues. Normandy was a rich province which in better days had contributed large sums to the budget of the kings of France. Henry V succeeded to their rights so far as war conditions allowed. The King took over the whole of the royal demesne in Normandy. He minted coins in his own name from the royal mint at Rouen. In spite of his promises of relief from the exactions of the Valois government he continued to collect the main imposts of the old regime, albeit in modified form. In May 1419 he reintroduced the *aides*, which had not been collected in most of Normandy since their abolition by John the Fearless in 1417. A tax of 5 per cent was imposed on merchandise exposed for sale and another of 25 per cent on beverages. The *gabelle*, which had been continuously collected, was reformed and reintroduced at the same time. In the year beginning 1 May 1419 the accounts of the Treasurer-General of Normandy record net receipts of about 160,438 *livres*, equivalent to about £24,000 sterling, of which 40 per cent came from taxation and another 46 per cent from demesne revenues. Fines and confiscations accounted for most of the rest. These figures significantly understate the true receipts from the conquered province. They do not include important transfers in kind, mainly grain, which were delivered to local garrisons in lieu of tax, nor do they include the cash drawings which Henry's war treasurer took directly from local receivers. In the immediate aftermath of the conquest spoil of war, which was paid directly to the war treasurer without passing through the Treasurer-General's accounts, contributed at least as much again as the recorded receipts of the province. The heavy indemnity levied on Rouen was never fully paid in spite of the vigorous measures taken to enforce it, and ultimately had to be converted into an annual impost. But 133,138 *écus* (equivalent to about £22,000 sterling) was received from this source alone over a period of five months after the city's surrender. Overall the King must have received rather more than the yield of an English Parliamentary subsidy from Normandy in the year after the conquest of the province was completed.[36]

How far the Normans accepted their new government is a difficult and controversial question, for few subjects have been more heavily influenced by anachronism, hindsight and patriotic myth. There was certainly some armed resistance even after the fall of Rouen. Shortly after the surrender a plot to murder Henry V at the Candlemas celebrations in Rouen cathedral came to light. Another plot to deliver the city to the Dauphinists was discovered in June. Others would follow in later years. How serious or widely supported

they were is impossible to say, but it is interesting that both plots of 1419 seem to have been betrayed from within. Less dramatic but more persistent was the sporadic guerilla warfare fought by men whom the English called 'brigands'. The political significance of their activities is a much disputed question. Rural banditry had been endemic in Normandy for years, as it had in other parts of France. The decline of agricultural incomes and the progressive abandonment of cultivated land had generated high levels of rural unemployment which were no longer capable of being absorbed by the recession-hit towns and cities. The mass flight of the peasantry following the English landings turned an existing crisis into a human disaster. It is impossible to say how far the upsurge of rural violence and criminality was due to opposition to the English occupation and how much to a more general defiance of authority by desperate men driven to outlawry. The task is made more difficult by loose terminology in the administrative records, which treated as treason many offences with no political content, such as robbery on the highway or any violent crime committed by someone who had taken the oath of allegiance to Henry V. A handful of the culprits were not French at all but English deserters. Some 'brigands', however, were undoubtedly political resistants. English documents of the period speak indiscriminately of 'brigands and others of the French party' or 'brigands or Armagnacs'. Abandoned land was commonly sequestered on the footing that its owners could be assumed to have left to join the Dauphin or else 'taken to the caves, marshes and fastnesses to become looters and brigands contrary to their oaths and allegiance'. The brigands set upon messengers and officials, robbed merchants on the road, attacked local fairs and levied *patis* on the inhabitants. This was a serious problem for the English, whose ability to maintain order in Normandy was an important element of their claim to the loyalty of Normans. They made strenuous efforts to root the brigands out. They put a price of six *livres* on their heads and executed them in great numbers, no fewer than 127 in the first year after they reorganised the government of the province.

Yet at least in the early years of the English occupation the operations of the brigands hardly amounted to an organised movement. They had no leadership. Judging by the ones who were caught the great majority were countrymen: peasants, agricultural labourers or rural tradesmen. Hardly any came from the nobility, among whom most of the political disaffection was to be found. The scale of the problem varied with the distress of the countryside. It was at its most intense in the immediate aftermath of the English conquest, when it was largely concentrated in Lower Normandy

around Caen and Bayeux, where rural unemployment was at its worst and the production and distribution of food had been badly disrupted by the advance of the invading army. By 1420, however, the immediate problem had subsided. 'In the bailliage of Caux ne in the march of Picard, blessed be God, ther ys no stirryng of none evil doers save beyonde the rivere of Sayne towards the basse of Normandy of certain brigands,' wrote the captain of Harfleur in June 1420. 'Brigauntez were never so fewe in those partyez,' reported the *bailli* of Cotentin at about the same time. Even in later years, when the situation deteriorated, the brigands never coalesced into great bands of violent rovers as the Tuchins of southern France had done in the previous century. There is little evidence of coordination with the Dauphin's captains or garrisons. As the Norman Thomas Basin observed in a famous page of his chronicle, whether they had abandoned the land out of hatred of the English or out of wickedness or because they were on the run, these men 'did not fight in the ranks of the French but like wild beasts and wolves in the remotest parts of the forest'.[37]

Plainly the great majority of those who abandoned valuable properties in Normandy and declined to return must have objected in principle to English rule. They were a minority, but an important one, which included almost all the higher nobility. The Harcourts, the Meluns, the Maunys, the Montenays, the Braquemonts, the Béthencourts, the Estoutevilles, the Paynels, the Hangests, the Tryes, the Garencières, the Gravilles and the des Essarts, names which constituted a roll call of the great Norman families in the councils and armies of the French kings for a century past, all abandoned their Norman domains and left the province. Men like these had long traditions of service to the French monarchy which were hard to put aside. Some of them held offices under the Crown or owed it personal military service. Some had property in other parts of France which made it difficult to measure their interests in purely Norman terms. The Harcourts were the greatest family of Normandy but they were also among the principal territorial magnates of Poitou in the heart of the Dauphin's appanage. The ablest and most famous noble refugees could hope for honourable employment at the Dauphin's court. Others who had no prospects outside their native province left it all the same. If we are to believe the Norman poet Robert Blondel they abandoned lives of ease and plenty to become tailors or innkeepers while their lands and titles in Normandy were usurped by Englishmen.[38]

How far were the feelings of the higher nobility about the English occupation shared by men of lower rank, the lesser nobles, the parish clergy, the tradesmen of the towns? For most of them the

question whether their government was legitimate or not was of little moment. Their priorities were to stay alive and to escape the catastrophes engulfing most of France. In the viscounty of Carentan seventy of the ninety-five landowners in occupation before 1417 were still there a decade later. The pattern seems to have been much the same in other parts of Normandy. It is probable that the great majority of those who fled before the armies of Henry V were motivated by fear rather than patriotism; just as those who later returned and submitted were drawn not by loyalty to Henry V but by personal ties, financial interest and the prospect of civil peace. These decisions rarely turned on political sentiment. The impoverishment of most of the neighbouring provinces by anarchy, famine and disease left them with few alternatives. In a world where guilds jealously protected their trades from outsiders and municipalities were reluctant to accept the burden of outdoor relief, refugees were unwelcome guests. At Amiens they were expelled from the town as 'useless mouths'. At Tours they were registered and threatened with the same fate.[39]

Writing from the comparative security of the 1470s and with the knowledge of the final expulsion of the English from France, Thomas Basin Bishop of Liseux thought that the English government had been maintained by nothing more than force and fear and that the Normans who tolerated it were only waiting for the chance to overthrow it: 'By a natural tendency, so to speak, they looked to their true kingdom, the oldest in the world, the kingdom of France.' Yet Basin's own story suggests a more complicated picture. His family, who were grocers in Caudebec, had fled after the capture of Harfleur with everything that they could carry, first to Rouen in 1415, then to Falaise in 1417 and finally to Brittany. But they returned to Caudebec after its surrender to the English in 1419. Basin's father was one of those who responded to Henry V's proclamation of February 1419 and swore the oath of allegiance. His story is probably fairly typical of the townsmen, clerics and smaller landowners who fled before the advancing armies and then thought better of it as the crisis passed. Basin himself went into the Church. He had plenty of opportunities for preferment in other parts of France but, after studying in Paris and in Italy, returned to Normandy to pursue an ecclesiastical career under English patronage. Like most Normans he was guided by love of home and by self-preservation. He accepted English rule for as long as it seemed likely to endure and changed sides when it was about to collapse.[40]

In a country as geographically fragmented and diverse as medieval France national sentiment had generally been the preserve

of an official and ecclesiastical elite, the class to which Thomas Basin had not been born but which he entered by virtue of his intellect and ambition. Yet even among his likes, notions of allegiance which had once seemed natural had been broken in 1419 by the internal divisions of France. For many Normans, especially in towns such as Rouen which had declared for the Duke of Burgundy, it was far from clear that the Dauphin was the representative of the French nation. Guillaume Le Bouteillier was not the only man who thought that the government of Charles VI had forfeited the right to the allegiance of the Normans by its inability to defend them; any more than Jean Ladvertit, the loud-mouthed canon of Sainte-Radegonde of Poitiers was the only one to think that the Dauphin was 'just a child who would say anything one wanted'.[41] Henry V by comparison appeared to be irresistible, his conquests a judgment of God. Although there were regular incidents of violence and indiscipline by English troops, well-informed Frenchmen were generally agreed that Henry V's army was a highly disciplined force by comparison with other armies of the period. More generally, Henry V behaved like the king that Charles VI had never been. He promised to restore, and to some extent did restore, standards of basic administration and public order. These may have fallen short of his claims, but they hardly existed in the rest of France.

Notes

1
'Cron. Norm.', 36, 40; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 166–9; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 734–6; Strecche, 'Chron.', 163; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 351–2; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 250; *Coll. doc. Angleterre*, no. 344; *Rôles Normands*, nos 191, 1004; *Foed.*, ix, 578–9, 588. Defences: Guibert, 13–18.

2
Fenin, *Mém.*, 100; *Beaurepaire, 'Accord', 314–19; Cochon, *Chron.*, 279; *Coll. doc. Angleterre*, no. 344; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 276. Braquemont: Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 134; *Journ. B. Paris,* 105. Malet: *Foed.*, ix, 602–3. Topography: see the plans of Gomboust (1652) in Mesqui (1986), 62, and Magin (*c.* 1700) in BN Cartes et Plans GE DD-2987/1052.

3
Coll. doc. Angleterre, nos 343–4; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 275–8; *Cron. Norm.*, 41; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 170–6; Strecche, 'Chron.', 163–7; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 258–60. Chastellux: *Chastellux, 390–1; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 165; 'Entrée de la reine', 107. Prefabricated bridge: PRO E364/57, m. 3d (Janyn).

4
Disarray: *Dépenses*, 14–17; *Ord.*, x, 456–62; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 273–4; 'Entrée de la reine', 108–9; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 254; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 135, 141–2. Entry: *Itin. Jean*, 443; 'Entrée de la reine', 105–8; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 260; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 352; *Journ. B. Paris*, 104; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 273–4; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 254; *Dépenses*, 14–17;

Ord., x, 456–62.

5

Council: 'Entrée de la reine', 107–8; *Coll. doc. Angleterre*, no. 344; *Dépenses*, no. 410. Domfront: *Foed.*, ix, 601–2. Pont-de-l'Arche: *Rôles Normands*, no. 210. Exeter at Rouen: Strecche, 'Chron.', 167–8; Page, 'Siege', 2–3, 6; *Brut*, ii, 387, 394, 395; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, 283.

6

Puiseux (1867), 1–12, 23–4; Cheruel, i, 1–7, *ii, 1–2, 3–4, 5–6; Strecche, '*Chron.*', 167–8; Page, 'Siege', 3–6; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 177–9; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 281–2; *Brut*, ii, 398; Chauvelays, 256–60. The garrison's cost, at 16,000 *livres* a month (BN Fr. n.a. 7624, fol. 494), is consistent with the numbers given by Fenin, *Mém.*, 103. Topography: see reconstructed plans at www.rouen-histoire.com/Fortifs, and in Cheruel, *Histoire de Rouen pendant l'époque communale* (1844), ii (end piece) and Puiseux (1867) (front piece). Population: Le Cacheux, *Rouen*, xxvii–xxix.

7

Page, 'Siege', 6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 282–3.

8

Page, 'Siege', 6–10; Strecche, 'Chron.', 168–71; *Brut*, ii, 387–8, 389, 395–6, 399; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 179–82; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 283–5; Cochon, *Chron.*, 280; 'Cron. Norm.', 41. Ships: PRO E364/57, m. 2 (Shedde). Bridge: PRO E364/57, m. 3d (Janyn).

9

Victualling: *Coll. doc. Angleterre,* nos 346, 348; PRO C64/9, m. 11d; *Mems. London*, 664; *CPR 1416–22*, 204; *CPR 1416–22*, 173; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 182–3. Quillebeuf: Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 190; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 738. Caudebec: Page, 'Siege', 10; *Brut*, ii, 388–9, 396; *Rôles Normands*, no. 226. Ste-Catherine: ibid., no. 223.

10

Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 189–90; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 300–1; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 356. Gloming: *Orig. Letters*, II. i, 78–9.

11

D. of Burgundy: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 250; *Auctarium Chartul. U. Paris*, ii, no. 2111 (written before submission of Caudebec on 7 Sept.). Dauphin: *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 983–7; *Lettres Tours*, 21–3; Delaville le Roulx, 178–80; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 356.

12

*Beaucourt, i, 439–40; *Fenin, *Mém.*, 271–2, 274–80.

13

Dépenses, nos 354, 357, 359, 812; *Ord.*, x, 473; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 278; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 288; *Itin. Jean*, 443–4; *Fenin, *Mém.*, 272; BN Clair. 21, p. 1491 (Braquemont), 53, p. 3929 (Gélu); Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 169–70; *Ord.*, x, 473–7, 490; 'Lettres closes', nos 8, 9; Besse, *Recueil*, 266. Recruitment: *Ord.*, x, 482; 'Lettres closes', nos 8, 9 (p. 335n[1]); *Extr. Reg. Tournai*, i, 171–2; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, nos 4299, 4302, 4306, 4309–12, 4314–16, 4320, 4322–5; *Dépenses*, no. 27; *Inv. AC Amiens*, iv, 86.

14

Councillors blamed: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 290; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 288–9; *Ord.*, x, 489, 491. Proscriptions: Maugis, i, 25; *Ord.*, x, 462; Bossuat (1960–1), 84–5; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 356, 359–60.

15

Ordinances: *Ord.*, x, 477–81, 490, 491; Favreau (1978), 280–2; Vaissète, ix, 1046n. Approach to English: *Foed.*, ix, 624, 626–8, 634–7; *Lettres des*

rois, ii, 348–9.

16

Dépenses, nos 380, 813–14; Beaucourt, i, 111 n^2, *445–6; *Ord.*, x, 489; BN Clair. 52, p. 3931 (Gélu); *Fenin, *Mém.*, 272–3. Lieutenancy: *Dognon (1899), 499; *Ord.*, x, 489–92.

17

Dépenses, no. 439; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 292–3, 298; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 294–5, 299; Waurin, *Rec. cron.*, ii, 251–2, 256; *Journ. B. Paris*, 113; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 185–7, 192–5; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 192–3.

18

Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 202–3; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 294; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, 4299–4329; *Dépenses*, no. 1361. Garrisons: *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, nos 4340–82. March of Burgundy: ibid., nos 4283–98, 4330–9. *Oriflamme: Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 300.

19

Finance: Schnerb (1987), 120, 126; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, nos 42–4; *Dépenses*, nos 142, 179, 206, 785, 828, 846; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 292; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 293–4; *Ord.*, x, 482–5. Mints: 'Lettres closes', no. 13; Dieudonné, 490–2; Saulcy (1877), 31, 37, 73–4, adding Lyon, St-André-lès-Avignon and Mirabel-aux-Baronnies; *Dépenses*, no. 287; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 63–5. Mints controlled by John: *Ord.*, x, 512–14; *Dieudonné*, 491; Schnerb (1987), 124; Vaughan (1966), 108; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, nos 1795–1881. 'Our ills': *Auctarium Chartul. U. Paris*, iv, no. 2120.

20

Proc. PC, ii, 350–8, to be read with the English ambassadors' instructions at *Foed.*, ix, 626–31. Chanc. Normandy: *Foed.*, ix, 571. Subsidies: *Parl. Rolls,* ix, 209 [9]. Borrowing: Steel, 158–9; BL Add. MSS 38525, fols 68–71.

21

Foed., ix, 632–45. Norry: *Gall. Christ.*, xii, 82–3; *Fasti*, xi, 174–5. Braquemont's son: *Foed.*, ix, 648.

22

Foed., ix, 631, 632, 647–8, 651–2; PRO 64/9, mm. 6 (2, 9 Dec.).

23

PRO C64/9, m. 6d (garrisons); *Rôles Normands*, no. 221; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 157–8, 161–2, 193–4; *Cron. Norm.*, 45–6; *Brut*, 389, 397–8, 399–400; Page, 'Siege', 16–17; *A. Collins, viii, 107 (letter of Sir John Sinclair); *Book London English*, 76–7. Irish: *Cal. Signet L.*, no. 836; *Excerpta Historica*, ed. S. Bentley (1833), 388–9; *Brut*, ii, 387, 397; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 284–5.

24

Burgundians: *Brut*, ii, 399; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 202–3; Waurin, *Rec. cron.*, ii, 255; Basin, *Hist.*, i, 64; *Dépenses*, no. 815; *Ord.*, x, 501–3; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 209–12, 213–14. Dauphinists: *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 302; Cagny, *Chron.*, 116; *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 984; BN Clair. 841, pp. 601–10, 618–24, 636, 640–47.

25

Foed., ix, 632, 653, 654–9; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 202; *Dépenses*, no. 375; Waurin, *Rec. cron.*, ii, 251–3; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 295–6. Dates: *Dépenses*, nos 375, 379, 467, 816–17.

26

BL Add. Chart. 74 (newsletter, late Nov.); Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 212–13; Page, 'Siege', 18, 20–2; *Brut*, ii, 390, 400–3, 416–17; Pseudo-Elmham,

Vita, 195–6; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 349, 353; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 296–7, 299.

27

Dépenses, nos 129–30, 132, 295, 470, 743, 818, 844, 855, 858, 939, 966, 1150, 1186, 1297, 1301–2, 1331; 'Lettres closes', no. 9 (p. 335); Besse, *Recueil*, 269; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 230; *Auctarium Chartul. U. Paris*, iv, no. 2125; *Itin. Jean,* 444; *Inv. AC Amiens*, ii, 28. Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 298, 299–300, 303; Waurin, *Rec. cron.*, ii, 259–60. Tours: Delaville le Roulx, 210–11; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, no. 393. La Charité: ibid., ii, nos 4136, 4203, 4387.

28

Rôles Normands, no. 259; *Foed.*, ix, 664; Page, 'Siege', 22–40; Strecche, 'Chron.', 171–4; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 297, 303–5.

29

Foed., ix, 664–7.

30

Rôles Normands, nos 1212–13; BL Cotton Caligula D V, fol. 55 (gaps supplied from BL Add. MSS 38525, fols 74–75vo); Page, 'Siege', 42–4; Strecche, 'Chron.', 174–5; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 308; Fenin, *Mém.*, 104–5; PRO 64/12, m. 12 (Bouteillier). John the F.: *Itin. Jean*, 445–7.

31

Auctarium Chartul. U. Paris, iv, no. 2120 (quote); Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 202; *Rôles Normands*, no. 268, 277, 282–4, 286–8, 296, 303, 307, 313, 319, 327, 443; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 308–9; *Cron. Norm.*, 47–8; BL Cotton Caligula D V, fol. 55 (quote, gaps supplied from Add. MS. 38525, fols 74–75vo); *Orig. Letters*, Ser. II. 1, 77–8. Honfleur: *Cron. Norm.*, 47; PRO E364/54, m. 2 (Welles, Huskard); PRO C64/9, m. 31d; *Rôles Normands*, no. 313. Î. de France: *Foed.*, ix, 679; PRO C64/10, mm. 19, 40; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 310, 312; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 266; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 252; *Journ. B. Paris*, 121, 123.

32

Foed., ix, 571, x, 142–3, 157; *Rôles Normands,* no. 300 for Norman *baillis*, plus Mantes, for which PRO C64/11, m. 39d; E101/187/14, fols 16–20 (royal garrisons). Financial administration: PRO E364/61, m. 2d (Allington [on Allington, see *HoC*, ii, 27–9]); Curry (1998 [1]), *104, 105–6; *Rôles Normands*, no. 290, 1079, 1222; PRO E187/14, 188/7, fol. 24vo. Seneschal: *Rôles Normands*, nos 300, 924. Palace: *Foed.*, ix, 745–6. Generally: Wylie and Waugh, iii, 244–7, 351–3; Allmand (1983), 83–4, 125.

33

Cron. Norm., 47–8; *Rôles Normands*, no. 297, 599; Puiseux (1866), 33–4, 100, 106–7. '*Bullettes*': Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 309–10; **Chron. Mont-St-Michel*, i, 91–2; 'Livre des trahisons', 141.

34

Newhall (1921), 185–6; Wylie and Waugh, iii, 74–5, 240–1; Allmand (1968), 464–5; Allmand (1983), 52–4, 57–8, 85–103. Major grants: *Rot. Norm.*, 259–60, 317–19; *Foed.*, ix, 739, 765–6, 772; PRO C64/10, m. 35 (D. of Exeter); *La Roque, iv, 1439–40. The three viscounties were removed from the jurisdiction of the *baillis: Rôles Normands*, nos 280, 606, 1020. Ports: *Eng. Chron.*, 44; *Cal. Letter Books I*, 159; *Rôles Normands*, no. 1261; Mollat (1952), 26.

35

Allmand (1968), 465, 467; Allmand (1983), 54, 62–3; *Engl. Suits*, 50, 155.

Conditions against alienation appear from March 1420: *Rôles Normands,* no. 771.

36

Demesne: *Rot. Norm*., 256; *Rôles Normands*, nos 290–3; Allmand (1968), 467–8. Mints: Lafaurie, *Monnaies*, i, nos 434, 439–40. *Aides: Rôles Normands*, nos 536, 779, 1368. *Gabelle*: Newhall (1921), 186–7; Wylie and Waugh, iii, 75. Revenues: PRO E101/187/14, fol. 15vo; E101/187/14, fol. 14vo. Rouen indemnity: PRO E364/69, mm. 6–11 (Philip) records foreign receipts from Norman sources of £43,955 for the period Oct. 1421 to Nov. 1422, including receipts during that year from the Rouen indemnity; *Chéruel, ii, 55–6, 71–5.

37

Strecche, 'Chron.', 177; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 226; *Rôles Normands*, nos 272, 1001, 1261 (48); *Quelques actes normands*, i, 59–60; *Actes Henry VI,* i, 107, and other examples in Jouet, 19–20 (but the author's view that 'brigands' were synonymous with resistants is indefensible; for a more balanced assessment, see Allmand [1983], 229–38); Basin, *Hist*., i, 106–8 (cf. Jouet, 98–9). Executions: PRO E101/187/14, fols 26vo–29; *Jouet, nos 1, 3–8. Class, regions: Jouet, 82–3, 100, 128, *175 (PJ 2). English reports: *Orig. Letters*, II. i, 73, 85. The only recorded instance of coordination with Dauphinists is in 1436: see Jouet, 119–20.

38

Puiseux (1866), 27–8, 32–7, 101–15; Blondel, *Oeuvres*, i, 162–3.

39

Basin, *Hist*., ii, 106; Basin, *Breviloquium*, 10–12; *Rôles Normands*, no. 334.

40

Dupont, 164–6; Frondeville, ii, 80; Plaisse, 304–5. Refugees: *Inv. AC Amiens*, ii, 30; Chevalier (1975), 179–80.

41

AN X1a 9197, fol. 28, cited in Lewis (1968), 70.

CHAPTER XV

On the Bridge of Montereau, 1419–1420

On 26 December 1418 the Dauphin formally abandoned the title of royal lieutenant by which he had justified his acts since his flight from Paris and declared himself to be Regent of France. It was a momentous change. He no longer claimed to be his father's delegate and could no longer be repudiated in the King's name by the King's Burgundian-controlled council in Paris. Instead he proclaimed himself a sovereign ruler. In a country which had been governed from Paris for more than two centuries the construction of a new state was a difficult challenge. But it was surmounted with astonishing speed and efficiency. The administrative capitals of the Dauphin's realm were fixed at Poitiers, the seat of the Chancery and the Parlement, and at Bourges, where the financial departments were installed and the formal sessions of the great council were usually held. The Dauphin himself was peripatetic. In the early years, his court passed the winters at Bourges and the summers travelling constantly with a large mounted bodyguard between Jean de Berry's palaces at Poitiers and Mehun-sur-Yèvre and the forbidding Angevin fortresses of Loches and Chinon in the Loire valley.[1]

The kernel of the future 'Kingdom of Bourges' was the personal appanage of the Dauphin comprising Touraine, Poitou, Berry and the Dauphiné beyond the Rhône. These holdings gave him not just a large and rich territorial base but an administration built on foundations created by his great-uncle Jean de Berry. To these were joined the neighbouring appanages of his allies the Dukes of Orléans and Anjou. Together the territories of the three French princes comprised the whole basin of the Loire from the Nivernais to the march of Brittany and the western provinces from Maine in the north to Saintonge in the south. The Duke of Burgundy had no presence in these regions except for a handful of isolated garrisons in Touraine and Poitou, the last of which were eliminated while John the Fearless was preoccupied with the relief of Rouen. Tours itself surrendered on 30 December after a siege of a month. A bribe of 14,000 *livres* and a generous grant of land eased the passage of the captain, Charles Labbé, into the Dauphin's allegiance. The Duke of Burgundy's sole surviving ally in the region, the perennially

troublesome robber-baron Jean Larcheveque, held out in his great fortress at Parthenay in western Poitou with the aid of a pervasive network of vassals and retainers. The submission of this place in August 1419 after a siege of four months by more than 3,000 men under Philip of Orléans Count of Vertus marked the effective end of resistance to the Dauphin's rule in his own appanage.[2]

By this time the Dauphin's officers had extended their power to most of southern France. The process was made easier by the fact that most of the royal officials of the south had been appointed by Jean de Berry or Bernard of Armagnac. At the time of the Dauphin's flight from Paris thirteen of the sixteen *baillis* and seneschals south of the Loire and the march of Burgundy were firm Armagnac partisans. They accepted the authority of the Dauphin at once. The one *bailli* who was thought to be unreliable was promptly ousted. There was nothing that the Burgundian government in Paris could do. They tried to appoint rival *baillis* of their own in three southern provinces where they hoped to find local support, but none of them was able to establish himself. The appanage of the Dukes of Bourbon, situated on the northern foothills of the Massif Central and bordering on both Berry and Burgundy, was in an ambiguous position both geographically and politically. The Duke was a prisoner in England. His wife and son, who had been in Paris when the city fell to the Burgundians, were in the hands of the Duke of Burgundy. But his officials on the spot spontaneously accepted the Dauphin's authority.[3]

This rapid and peaceable extension of the Dauphin's authority could not have been achieved by administrators alone. The key to the Dauphin's achievement was the instinctive support of the provincial nobility and the oligarchies of the towns. With the King a passive cipher in the hands of whoever controlled Paris, even those who were not committed Armagnacs recognised that a regency was unavoidable. Once the concept of a regency was accepted it was obvious that it belonged by right to the heir to the throne. In their conferences with the English at Alençon the Dauphin's ambassadors had claimed to have the support of 'almost all the nobility of France'.[4] The English delegates scoffed at this boast but it was borne out by the failure of the Duke of Burgundy's muster at Beauvais and the eventual secession of all the provinces of France which lay beyond the reach of his armies. Outside his own domains John the Fearless's political base proved to be almost as narrow as the Count of Armagnac's had been. It was limited to his own vassals and retainers and the population of the larger towns of the north. In only two regions of southern France was there a serious struggle for control. One was the Mâconnais and the Lyonnais and the other was

Languedoc. In both cases, the Dauphin inherited a complex situation from the government of the Count of Armagnac.

The Mâconnais was a rich county lying south of the duchy of Burgundy which had been part of the royal domain since the middle of the thirteenth century. Before 1417 the region had been little affected by the civil wars. Mâcon, the provincial capital, was a prosperous wine town and an important administrative centre. The province was administered in 1417 by Philippe de Bonnay, a loyal retainer of the house of Orléans, who combined the offices of *bailli* of Mâcon and seneschal of Lyon. In July 1417, as John the Fearless's inflammatory manifesto was circulating among the towns of the north, copies appeared at Mâcon nailed to the doors of churches and public buildings. One of the Duke's retained legal counsel, who lived in the town, persuaded a majority of his fellow citizens to declare for his master. Their example was followed in most of the other towns of the region. In September the Chancellor of Burgundy, Jean de Saulx, arrived to take possession. He brought with him a large number of troops from Burgundy to make his approaches to the local communities 'more effective'. A team of officials from the Chambre des Comptes of Dijon followed to lay hands on all local sources of revenue, grumbling all the time about the 'strangeness' of the locals, the obstructiveness of royal officials and the low quality of Mâcon wine.[5]

Jean de Saulx's main objective, however, was not the Mâconnais but Lyon. A large industrial city at the frontier of France on the crossroads of the trade-routes to the Low Countries, Germany and the Mediterranean, Lyon too had been sheltered from the worst consequences of the wars of the princes. The city was governed by a conservative patrician oligarchy elected by the fifty or so masters of the trade guilds. They had strong royalist instincts like their ilk in other parts of France. But like them also they had to contend with an important Burgundian faction among the humbler classes who bore the brunt of royal taxation. Lyon's first citizen, the rich lawyer and consul Jean Le Viste, a titular royal councillor close to the Armagnacs, was sure that the Burgundians would take over the city after the next communal elections which were due in December 1417. He rallied the oligarchy around the *bailli* and organised a swift internal coup. The elections were cancelled. Oaths of loyalty were taken from the citizens. Professional mercenaries were hired and heavy municipal taxes imposed to pay their wages. The walls of the city were repaired and the outlying castles of the region garrisoned. At the beginning of 1418 both sides raised the stakes. Gilbert de Lafayette, who had recently commanded the unsuccessful defence of Falaise against the English, was sent by the Armagnac

government in Paris to take charge of the defence of the Lyonnais. He was joined by Humbert de Grolée, a young professional soldier from the Dauphiné. They brought reinforcements with them. The Queen and the Duke of Burgundy responded by nominating Girard de la Guiche, a native of the Mâconnais then serving in the Burgundian garrison of Pontoise, as *bailli* of Mâcon and seneschal of Lyon. He appeared in the region in January 1418 with more troops. There followed a prolonged stalemate and a debilitating war of siege and ambush which made the roads of the region impassable and quickly drew in bands of *routiers* from neighbouring areas in search of easy loot. The stand-off hardened existing loyalties. When Paris fell to the Burgundians in June 1418 Lyon promptly sent a delegation to Bourges to promise the Dauphin their support. The Dauphin for his part plied them with favours and promises of more to come: their own regional *parlement*, perhaps even a university. Relations with the government in Paris were severed. By the end of 1418 the southern Mâconnais had become a frontier between the kingdoms of Paris and Bourges. The Duke of Burgundy never controlled Lyon.[6]

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Languedoc was a bigger prize. It comprised the three royal seneschalsies of Beaucaire, Carcassonne and Toulouse, covering a vast area extending from the Rhône in the east to the march of Gascony in the west. It was bounded on the north by smaller provinces which depended on it administratively and to some extent economically: Rouergue, Quercy, the eastern march of Gascony and the mountainous regions of Velay, Vivarais and Gevaudan on the eastern face of the Massif Central. Languedoc was distinctive in a number of ways. It was a region of dominant towns with a highly urbanised aristocracy. It had a long tradition of autonomy, a vigorous public life and dense political networks which gave it a certain unity in spite of its great size and varied geography. The Midi had contributed some notable figures to the civil wars of the north: the Count of Armagnac, the lord of Albret, the Viscount of Narbonne. But apart from these great noblemen, whose political vision extended well beyond their own province, the region had stood aside from the divisions of the princes. The issues which divided the politicians in Paris had little resonance there. The pervasive networks of clients, retainers and allies through which the houses of Burgundy and Orléans had pursued their vendetta did not extend to the Midi. Communications were poor, especially in the anarchic conditions of 1418, when it could take weeks for a messenger to reach the Loire taking obscure byways to avoid hostile

bands of soldiers.[7]

The burning issue in Languedoc was taxation. The Estates-General of Languedoc, which had met regularly since the 1340s, had been the principal organ of the province's political life and the means by which grants of taxation were made and collective grievances addressed. But since 1393 it had in effect been suppressed and taxes imposed by decree, as they had been in the north for many years. This was part of a sustained attempt of the provincial government to break down local solidarities in order to contain resistance to the relentless fiscal demands of the state. These policies were generally associated with the Duke of Berry, who had been the absentee Lieutenant in Languedoc from 1401 until his death in 1416 apart from a gap of two years. Jean de Berry had exploited the absence of representative assemblies to impose brutal levels of taxation, unprecedented in peacetime, the proceeds of which were expended almost entirely in other parts of France. As a result he and his son-in-law Bernard of Armagnac, who had generally acted as his local representative, had been widely hated in Languedoc. After the Duke of Berry's death in 1416 the *capitouls* of Toulouse petitioned the government to retain the administration of the province in its own hands and appoint no more lieutenants. The Armagnac council in Paris complied. But, perennially on the edge of bankruptcy, they continued the dead man's harsh fiscal regime. The Count of Armagnac appointed his nineteen-year-old son, Jean Viscount of Lomagne, as Captain-General of Languedoc and put him at the head of a commission charged with imposing the government's authority and collecting the taxes ordained by the council in Paris. The move provoked murmurs of incipient revolution in the towns. The *taille* of July 1416 was widely resisted in the south. The *taille* of February 1417 appears to have brought in almost nothing.[8]

The rising fiscal pressures on Languedoc had coincided with a sharp rise in brigandage. Henry V's two invasions of Normandy were followed by a succession of English offensives from Bordeaux and renewed activity by the Anglo-Gascon companies of the march. With the expiry of the truce in 1415 they poured into the Toulousain. In the spring of 1416 the new English Seneschal of Guyenne, Sir John Tiptoft, had launched a major campaign in the Garonne valley, the largest since 1407, which resulted in the capture of La Réole, the most important French fortress of the valley and the gateway to the Toulousain. In spite of its strategic importance La Réole had been poorly defended by a population reduced by drought, plague and disorder. In the following year a French army under the Viscount of Lomagne reoccupied the town

but failed to retake the citadel after a siege of nearly five months. La Réole was relieved from Bordeaux just before the deadline fixed by a conditional surrender agreement. Shortly after this Tiptoft withdrew to rejoin Henry V in Normandy, but his work had been done. Over the following weeks bands of Gascon *routiers* spread up the Dordogne into Quercy and Bas-Limousin and along the Garonne into the Toulousain sowing havoc wherever they went.[9]

This was fertile ground for John the Fearless's programme of administrative reform and tax cuts. The seneschals of Languedoc did their best to suppress the news of the Duke of Burgundy's proclamation of August 1417 abolishing the *aides*. But when, inevitably, the first reports reached the Midi, they provoked serious unrest. It began in Carcassonne. In about October 1417 the seneschal of Carcassonne tried to introduce a royal garrison into the citadel. The citizens shut him out and held the gates against him. In December the rebellion spread to Toulouse, the largest and most political city of Languedoc. Toulouse had suffered badly from the ills of the age. Its population had declined steeply since the great epidemics of the previous century, leaving a smaller number of households to bear a steadily rising burden of taxation. Its trade, always sensitive to the security of the roads, had been damaged by the anarchy. It was against this difficult background that in January 1418 the royal seneschal of Toulouse, Jean de Bonnay (the brother of the *bailli* of Lyon), appeared before the *capitouls* of the city together with the receiver-general of the *aides* in Languedoc to press for payment of the *taille*. They produced the letters which had recently arrived from Paris by which the Armagnac council appointed the Dauphin as the King's lieutenant throughout France. The *capitouls* refused to recognise the letters and after lengthy argument declined to pay the tax. When the receiver-general threatened to collect it by force they called for help from Hughes Viscount of Caraman, a local nobleman of known Burgundian sympathies. He raised a militia of 200 men-at-arms and 100 crossbowmen, took control of the city and expelled the seneschal. Caraman called on the towns of Languedoc to close their gates against royal officers and seize the coffers of the collectors of the *taille*. Most of them followed his lead. An alliance was made between Toulouse, Carcassonne, Béziers and Narbonne. From these centres the rebellion spread across the seneschalsies of Toulouse and Carcassonne.[10]

John the Fearless moved immediately to exploit the collapse of royal authority in Languedoc. From Chartres, where he was constructing his new government in the Queen's name, he purported to dismiss the seneschal of Carcassonne and replace him

by one of his own chamberlains. On 30 January 1418, when the Queen's government had moved to Troyes, the Duke appointed a commission of four of his councillors to take control of the province. The chief commissioner was Louis de Chalon-Arlay, a nobleman from the Imperial county of Burgundy who was also Prince of Orange in Provence. He left on his mission in March 1418 accompanied by his colleagues, together with a company of nearly a thousand mounted men and a flotilla of barges laden with artillery. They arrived at Pont-Saint-Esprit at the beginning of April and took possession of its vital fortified bridge over the Rhône. From here they made a triumphal progress through Languedoc announcing at every stage the abolition of all royal taxes other than the *gabelle*. At Montpellier they were received by Hughes de Caraman and delegations of the leading cities of the province. By the end of May they were in Toulouse. There they purged the provincial administration of their opponents and installed Hughes as seneschal. By August 1418 most of Languedoc was in Burgundian hands. Jean de Lomagne, shattered by his father's death in Paris, abandoned his office as Captain-General and withdrew from the province.[11]

The Prince of Orange's triumph was spectacular but it withered in his hands. The Burgundians were popular in the towns but had little support among the provincial nobility or in the *plat pays*. And even the towns were not all under their control. A four-month siege had been required to reduce Nîmes. Beaucaire was still in the hands of its Dauphinist seneschal. There were Dauphinist garrisons in the great Rhône fortresses of Roquemaure and Villeneuve-lès-Avignon blocking the road and river routes of the valley. The evicted Dauphinist seneschals of Toulouse and Carcassonne continued to exercise their offices from behind the walls of Buzet and Giroussens in the Tarn valley. Between them they controlled important garrisons at Pézenas and at least three other walled towns, from which they conducted a guerilla war against the Burgundian commissioners. The Dauphin's officers remained firmly in control of the outlying provinces: Rouergue and the south Gascon march, where the house of Armagnac was dominant, and the eastern provinces of Velay, Vivarais and Gévaudan, which were held for the Dauphin by the efforts of the count of Polignac. The Dauphin fanned the embers. He appointed Philippe de Levis lord of La Roche to succeed the Viscount of Lomagne as his Captain-General and sent him urgently to the south with a troop of mounted men. It soon became clear that to establish themselves securely in Languedoc the Burgundian commissioners would have to turn it into a battleground like the Île de France or the Mâconnais.[12]

This was the very thing that the communities of Languedoc were

determined to avoid. They had no interest in the wider agenda of the Dauphin or the Duke of Burgundy. Their object was to reassert their control over taxation and to protect their autonomy against governments of every stripe. Unknown to the Burgundian commissioners, they had sent a delegation before the Queen at Troyes and had obtained some valuable political concessions. In particular she had been persuaded to issue letters patent which not only reinstated the Estates-General of Languedoc but allowed the men of the province to convene it on their own initiative. As a result, when the Prince of Orange reached Toulouse, he found himself obliged to share power with the Estates-General. He immediately prevailed on the Queen to modify her letters patent so that in future they could meet only by royal licence and in the presence of her officers. Armed with this document, he postponed the first assembly. But it was too late for manoeuvres of this kind. The Estates-General assembled at Carcassonne on the original date, 22 July, and continued in session on their own authority until September. The commissioners were unable to prevent them from reaching some most unwelcome decisions. Having perhaps heard that the Prince of Orange had asked the Duke of Burgundy to appoint him as Captain-General of Languedoc, they objected. The King's authority, they said, should in future be exercised only by ordinary royal officers, in other words by the seneschals. They went on to make it clear that they would not take sides between the Dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy. Instead they proposed to play them off against each other, sending delegations to both with petitions for 'reliefs, privileges, franchises and liberties'.

The Burgundian commissioners were in no position to argue. They did not have the resources to protect the populations of Languedoc from the surviving Dauphinist garrisons or from the growing number of *routier* companies operating in the province. They could not levy taxation without consent because of the Duke of Burgundy's proclamations. The Estates were asked to vote a subsidy but would only agree to a derisory tax of 28,000 *livres*. In desperation the Prince of Orange turned to the *gabelle*, the one royal tax which the Duke of Burgundy had left in place. He tried to increase its yield by forcing the towns to buy minimum quantities of salt in bulk. They refused. Unable to pay his troops, the Prince of Orange was obliged to stand by as they lived off the land, plundering some of the richest trade-routes of western Europe and destroying whatever residual goodwill he still had in Languedoc.[13]

In this unstable situation the towns of Languedoc turned to the Count of Foix. Jean de Grailly Count of Foix, a 'cunning prince' according to the chronicler of his house, had inherited with his

Pyrenean territories all the shrewdness and ambition of his predecessors. He also disposed of the largest military following in the Midi. For as long as his great regional rival Bernard of Armagnac was alive Jean de Foix was a natural ally of the Duke of Burgundy. But as soon as the Count of Armagnac met his death in the June days in Paris he began to recalculate his advantages. The Count of Foix had no interest in the life-and-death struggle then unfolding in the north between the Dauphin and the Duke of Burgundy, any more than the Estates-General did. He wanted to bring an end to the seventy-year dominance of the region by the Counts of Armagnac. With Bernard gone, the rival dynasty was at a low ebb, devoid of allies, without influence in national politics and threatened in its Gascon heartlands by the renascent power of England. The heir to the Armagnac domains, Jean de Lomagne, was twenty-one years old, lacking in the ferocious energy of his forebears and inexperienced even for an age when maturity came early. The Count of Foix seized his opportunity. He received the delegations of the two western seneschalsies of Languedoc at Mazères at the southern edge of the county of Foix and offered them the protection that the Burgundian commissioners had been unable to provide. He sent his representatives to the Estates-General at Carcassonne and rapidly elbowed aside the Prince of Orange. Then he sent his agents to the north to offer his support to the highest bidder. His ambassador and a herald attended the Dauphin's great council at Chinon in early August 1418. Another herald went to Paris with a gracious message for the Duke of Burgundy.[14]

It was the Dauphin who responded first. The council at Chinon had been attended by a number of southern lords. On their advice he decided to offer the lieutenancy of Languedoc to the Count of Foix. Letters patent were drawn up on 17 August and sent to the south. A similar commission was given to Regnault de Chartres Archbishop of Reims. The terms of their appointments suggest that the Archbishop was expected to devote his attention to the Rhône valley while the Count of Foix concentrated on western Languedoc and the Gascon march where his influence was strongest. The Count accepted the offer. But he waited for several months before announcing it while he pursued his negotiations with the Duke of Burgundy. At the end of December 1418, his representatives appeared before an assembly of the city of Toulouse, produced their master's letters of appointment from the Dauphin and declared that he proposed to take over the government of the province. The announcement created a sensation. The meeting adjourned while the Prince of Orange was consulted. When the assembly reconvened in early January they were divided. Most of those present, the

patrician oligarchy among the *capitouls*, the clergy, the royal officials, even the Burgundian seneschal Hughes de Caraman, were in favour of accepting the Count of Foix's appointment and submitting to the Dauphin. Another meeting a few days later, at which the outlying district was represented, reversed the decision. In the streets sentiment still favoured the Duke of Burgundy's commissioners. There were ugly demonstrations against the Count of Foix. The houses of those who wanted to submit to him were torched. The turncoat Hughes de Caraman was drummed out of the city. A Burgundian faction briefly took control of the council and put through a fiery resolution urging out-and-out opposition to the Dauphin and the Count of Foix. In February 1419 the Count marched down the river valleys with an army to settle the issue by force.[15]

The Prince of Orange had already decided that he could not win a trial of strength with the Count of Foix. But realising that the Count cared not a fig for the Dauphin or indeed for either party, he thought that it might still be possible to ensure that Languedoc remained neutral. So, as soon as the Dauphin's commission to Jean de Foix was known, the Prince of Orange sent one of his fellow commissioners, the Viscount of Murat, back north to press the Duke of Burgundy to have the Count of Foix appointed as Lieutenant in Languedoc for the King's part also. John the Fearless received the Viscount of Murat at Lagny, where he was sheltering from the contempt of the Parisians after the humiliating failure of his attempt to relieve Rouen. At a council meeting in the town on 20 January 1419 it was agreed to accept the Prince of Orange's advice. Fresh letters of appointment were prepared relieving the Prince of Orange of his duties and appointing the Count of Foix as Lieutenant. For reasons which are unclear Murat was detained in the north until the end of February and the letters were not published in Languedoc until April 1419. But their impact then was dramatic. Toulouse, Carcassonne and Montpellier submitted in turn to a Lieutenant who now held his commission from both parties. The Count announced his intention of restoring the peace and uniting local Dauphinists and Burgundians against the English. He conducted no purges, leaving the nominees of both sides in their posts. He expelled the *routier* garrisons from the three seneschalsies. When in July 1419 the Estates-General met at Toulouse Languedoc appeared to have achieved almost complete harmony and to have withdrawn from the political maelstrom of the rest of France.[16]

The Dauphin was highly dissatisfied by the Count of Foix's refusal to govern Languedoc in his interest. But he had got much the better part of the deal. The Duke of Burgundy's commissioners were

expelled from most of Languedoc, leaving only a handful of garrisons behind them: Nîmes, Pont-Saint-Esprit and Aigues-Mortes in the Rhône valley and Sommières in the eastern Toulousain. Once the Burgundians had left John the Fearless's support in the towns, with the solitary exception of Carcassonne, faded away. A year later John the Fearless's financial officials were refusing to visit the province to pay the wages of the remaining garrisons for fear that they would never get back alive. For the Duke of Burgundy it was a serious and public defeat.[17]

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For much of the year 1419 each of the three rival powers in France, Henry V, John the Fearless and the Dauphin, endeavoured to play off the other two against each other. Secure for the moment in the possession of Normandy and disposing of the largest army in France, Henry V invited offers. Early in February the Dauphin's commissioners met the councillors of Henry V in the Franciscan house at Rouen. On 12 February 1419 they agreed upon a summit meeting between the two men. It was to take place on 26 March at a site to be agreed between Evreux and Dreux on the southern march of Normandy. A truce was to be proclaimed with immediate effect, extending to all territory controlled by either prince between the Seine and the Loire until 23 April. Meanwhile the English King set about exploring what offers he might expect from the Duke of Burgundy. The reality was that all three parties were under intense pressure to arrive at a settlement.[18]

For Henry V the main problems were money and manpower. The campaign had so far lasted more than eighteen months, longer than any previous English campaign in France. It cost between £8,000 and £10,000 a month to keep his army in the field. The King's relations with his new subjects depended on his ability to maintain discipline in his army and that meant paying them punctually, 'the which must nedes be doon', as his councillors pointed out, 'or ell withoute recoviry Normandy shold be lost from hym'. Yet by 1419 the army's wages were falling seriously into arrears. In spite of the opening of an uncertain new revenue stream from Normandy itself the bulk of the money to pay the army still had to be found in England. In the spring of 1419 £30,000 in gold coin, £2,000 in silver coin and 'halfe a tonne tyght' of silver bullion arrived at Harfleur, most of which must have represented the final instalment of the Parliamentary subsidy of 1417. No further Parliamentary subsidy could be expected before the end of the year.

Even with the money to pay them the English army in France was a wasting asset. Its payroll strength was about 12,000 men.

Most of the captains who had recruited these men were approaching the second anniversary of their indentures. They would have to be persuaded to stay. This would not be easy for they were not professional soldiers and many of them were fed up with fighting. Writing to his father-in-law in England from the siege of Cherbourg to ask for a loan of £20, Sir John Sinclair declared himself to be 'whole of body but not of ease in hert'. He bitterly resented the ordinances of war which forced him to pay for all that he ate, 'considering ye of the long tyme that we have been here and of the expensis that we have had at every siege that we have come to and have had no wages since that we came out of Ingelond, fo that we have almost spent al that ever that we had'. 'I prey yow ye prey for us,' another soldier wrote home, 'that we may come soon out of this unlusty souldyour's lyf in to the lyf of Englond.' Meanwhile men were being lost to disease and battle casualties. As the territory under English occupation expanded, ever larger numbers had to be detached for garrison service, more than a third of the army by the summer of 1419. There was a steady flow of desertions, most of whom found their own way back to the 'lyf of Englond'. The water-baillifs at the principal ports were ordered to look out for men without leave tickets wanting a passage home and arrest them. At Rouen cargo holds were searched for deserters. At Calais the captain of the town was authorised to hang them.[19]

These losses were increasingly difficult to replace. The King instructed his council at Westminster to identify suitable men-at-arms and order them to serve in the army in France, a rare reversion to an older pattern of compulsory military service. But the commissioners sent into the counties to act on this order met with excuses everywhere: poverty, infirmity, incompetence. The council concluded that many of these excuses were justified. England's resources of military manpower were exhausted. The best men were already in France with the King. Only the dross remained. A similar picture emerges from another survey in the following year, judging by the one county return to have survived (from Yorkshire). Only five gentlemen in the whole county confessed themselves able and willing to fight for the King. A few more were prepared to hire a substitute. Of the rest, leaving aside those who were too old or infirm, most pleaded poverty. They had served already, often returning impoverished or wounded; or they had spent their wealth in supporting a kinsman who had served; or their estates were burdened by their mothers' dowers or the claims of their children; or they were not eligible ('says he is no gentleman'). Appeals to the Gascons for recruits fared no better. They were afraid of the Castilians who had already launched a raid in force by the coast

road against Bayonne. They could not spare the men, they replied, or find the money for their advances.[20]

John the Fearless was under even greater pressure than Henry. He soon learned about the Dauphin's plan to meet Henry V near Evreux and obtained a copy of the truce agreed between them. But his options were limited. The debacle of Rouen had weakened him politically. Financially he was in dire straights. Tax receipts were badly affected by the disordered state of the country and the abolition of the *aides*. What money was available for war expenditure was almost entirely consumed in settling the heavy arrears and debts incurred in the campaigns of 1417 and 1418 and in paying the Burgundian garrisons in Picardy, Champagne and the Mâconnais and the personal military escort of the Duke. After paying off the army of Beauvais in January 1419 the war treasurers received no more funds until September.[21]

Meanwhile Paris was being strangled by the Dauphinist garrisons around it. Inside the walls John the Fearless's agents encountered mounting anger and unrest. The city's leaders believed that he had abandoned them. They were furious that he had kept the King away from the city and had removed the higher direction of the government to Provins and Troyes. They accused him of having passed up opportunities to make peace with the Dauphin on acceptable terms. They opened their own negotiations with the Dauphin, apparently without consulting him. In much of this they were supported by the judges of the Parlement, who were beginning to assume a prominent role in the politics of the capital. A succession of ill-tempered and inconclusive meetings with John's representatives was held in the Parlement chamber at which the parties exchanged recriminations. Finally the Duke of Burgundy summoned a great council of his party to decide what to do. The council met on 26 February 1419, not in Paris but at Provins. They decided to send an embassy to Normandy for exploratory talks with the English King's council. If that went well they proposed that their ambassadors should proceed to Rouen for a meeting with Henry V himself. The ever-flexible Duke of Brittany was invited to mediate.

But the Burgundians did not really want a deal with the English. They issued an emotional appeal to the Dauphin which they circulated among the walled towns of France, imploring him to join forces with them against Henry V. Otherwise, they declared, they would have no alternative but to agree terms with him. Considering the state of the realm and the power of the English, they said, they would all be disinherited unless they settled their differences.[22] John's circular exposed all the dilemmas of the rival party leaders. An alliance with the invader was the worst possible option for both

of them. It could only divide their supporters and discredit them in the eyes of French opinion. Their advisers understood this perfectly. What each of them really wanted was to unite France under his own leadership, on his own terms. Each of them hoped to reduce the other to total submission by threatening to cut a deal with the English. Yet when it came to the point, neither was prepared to do it.

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For a few months in 1419 the Dauphin had high hopes of being able to escape these dilemmas with the aid of France's traditional allies, Scotland and Castile, who promised to bring him a decisive accession of strength that might have transformed the balance of forces in France.

The Scottish kingdom's relations with England had sharply deteriorated since the accession of Henry V. There were a number of reasons for this. One was the eclipse of the Percy family, which had defended the border and managed England's relations with Scotland until they lost the wardenship of the march after the rebellion of 1403 and their earldom and lands after the rebellion of 1405. The current head of the house, the son of the famous Hotspur, had been in Scotland at the time of the Percies' last, fatal rising in 1408 and remained there afterwards, half-exile, half-prisoner. None of the great northern families, not even the Neville Earls of Westmorland, had succeeded in filling the Percies' place. Another reason was the loss of most of the pieces by which the English government had held the Scottish government in check since the battle of Humbleton Hill in 1402. The Earl of Douglas had been released from captivity in 1407. Murdoch Stewart, the eldest son of the Duke of Albany, was exchanged for the Percy heir and a ransom of £10,000 in 1416. The Scottish King James remained a prisoner in London, but his value as a bargaining counter proved to be very limited. Although Albany went through the motions of bargaining for his release, he had little interest in the fate of a prince whose return to Scotland would spell the end of his rule. The real problem, however, was that Albany himself was no longer the power that he had once been. Now in his late seventies, the Scottish Governor's attention had for years been concentrated on his family's struggle for power and land north of the Forth. Meanwhile Scotland fragmented into vast, semi-autonomous territorial lordships controlled by ambitious local magnates. The power with whom the English had to contend was not Albany but Douglas. Justiciar south of the Forth, keeper of Edinburgh castle and warden of all three marches towards England, Archibald Earl of Douglas exercised most of the powers of the

Scottish Crown in southern Scotland. His allies and followers dominated the borders. Douglas had a vested interest in war. The main source of his power in Scotland was his network of clients and his military following. They depended for their livelihood on war service and plunder. To maintain their loyalty he had to find them opportunities.[23]

Late medieval Scotland was one of the most heavily militarised societies in western Europe. Yet Scottish armies had traditionally a low reputation. They were regarded as undisciplined and ill-equipped hooligans who rarely attacked defended fortresses or risked a pitched battle. The French captains who had fought with them on the border in 1385 had had to bring armour and weapons with them to arm their allies. They returned home with dismal reports of the Scots' martial skills. Jean de Vienne, the commander of the French contingent, reckoned that there were only 500 properly armed and mounted men-at-arms in the whole country, the rest being no more than pillagers. A quarter of a century later they were still being referred to in French records as 'wild Scots'. Yet the Scottish way of war was changing, especially among the followers of the Douglases and their allies on the border. At Humbleton Hill in 1402 the Scottish army had included a large force of well armed and equipped longbowmen, 'their armour shining like silver when it was hit by the rays of the sun'. According to the English chronicler Thomas Walsingham the Scots had been improving their equipment for the previous three years before the battle. Douglas himself wore an 'exceptionally sumptuous' suit of plate armour. Humbleton Hill had been a disaster for the Scots but there is some evidence that they took its lessons to heart. More money had been invested in equipment and horseflesh. Archers had replaced the traditional spearmen and began to fight in tactical units with fixed ratios of men-at-arms like those of English armies. Marching and battle discipline improved. One symptom of this renascence of Scottish arms was the regular appearance of Scottish mercenary companies in Continental armies alongside the companies of Bretons, Gascons and Béarnais whose tradition of mercenary service was far older. In 1408 the Duke of Albany's nephew Alexander Stewart Earl of Mar and his company had fought in the Burgundian army at the battle of Othée. John the Fearless had sent agents to Scotland in 1411 to find archers. Scottish volunteers fought for the French government in the civil war of 1411–12, in the garrison of Paris under the regime of the Count of Armagnac, and in the Dauphin's armies in the Loire valley in 1418.[24]

The reopening of the war with France presented Douglas and his allies with their opportunity. The Anglo-Scottish truce expired in

June 1415. Coincidentally this was just a month before England's final break with France. While the French ambassadors at Winchester tried to argue Henry V out of his invasion plans, another French embassy was canvassing support at the court of the Duke of Albany at Perth. The Scots crossed the border into Northumberland in July, just days before the English fleet sailed from the Solent. Later in the year Douglas invaded Cumberland in force and burned the town of Penrith. These attacks were costly for the English. The garrisons of the north had to be heavily reinforced and substantial funds committed to the defence of the march. The destruction is poorly documented but it was clearly extensive. In November 1415 the three northern counties of Northumberland, Cumberland and Westmorland and the town of Newcastle had to be exempted from payment of the Parliamentary subsidy owing to war damage.[25]

Two years later, in August 1417, the Scots raised a large army with a war fleet and an artillery train and launched a powerful offensive to coincide with the sailing of Henry V's army for Normandy. The Earl of Douglas besieged the English fortress of Roxburgh while the Duke of Albany advanced on Berwick. Raiding parties split off from the main columns and invaded the northern counties of England. According to one English report they were accompanied by troops from France. The English response was more than usually effective. Henry Percy, newly reinstated as Earl of Northumberland and restored to his family's lands and offices, gathered the men of the border at Barmoor, ten miles south of Berwick. By chance the Duke of Exeter was at Bridlington in Yorkshire on a pilgrimage around the northern shrines. He recruited another army in the East Riding while the aged Archbishop Bowet raised the rest of Yorkshire. The Duke of Bedford, as Keeper of the Realm in Henry V's absence, came up from the Midlands. Albany's troops, who were encamped around Berwick, panicked and abandoned their siege works, leaving their tents in the fields and their ladders propped against the walls. At Roxburgh the Scottish miners were tunnelling towards the walls when the news of Albany's withdrawal came. Douglas was reported to be confident of having the place within a fortnight. But faced with the concentration of the whole English army against him he too was forced to withdraw. The 'Foul Raid', as the Scots themselves called it, was the largest Scottish military enterprise since 1402. It was a humiliating failure for the Scots, but it created serious problems for the English. The Duke of Exeter's arrival in France, which had been expected that autumn, had to be delayed until the following spring. Over the next few years the defence of the north ate into the English government's already stretched resources. They were forced to keep

powerful forces on the border and to spend large sums on strengthening Roxburgh and Berwick. The cost of all this rose to three times what it had been a decade before, for the first time outstripping Calais as a charge on the English Exchequer.[26]

For the Scots, however, the failure of the Foul Raid was symptomatic of a broader malaise. The border war was yielding diminishing returns as the defences of the north of England improved. English reprisals and punitive expeditions probably caused far more damage in Scotland. The captain of Roxburgh harried Lothian for two years after the Foul Raid, reducing it to a barren wasteland. As a result the Scots began to look to the wars of France for military employment.

The first Scottish free companies in France were uncoordinated private ventures. But the Scottish presence entered a new phase when the Earl of Douglas began to interest himself in the possibility of hiring out an entire Scottish contract army to the French government. In the spring of 1413 his eyes were opened to the prospect of lucre by the recent exploits of the Earl of Arundel and the Duke of Clarence. He travelled to Paris with his kinsman Henry Sinclair Earl of Orkney and an 'honourable company' of fifty men-at-arms. There, he opened negotiations with John the Fearless, then in control of the French government, offering to ship a ready-made army of 4,000 Scots to Flanders for service against the English on the Gascon march. This proposal appears to have been turned down. Cost was probably the main consideration but there may also have been some residual scepticism about the value of Douglas's troops. Some people thought that they would be better employed making trouble for the English in the north of England.[27] For a time this is what Douglas did. But after the failure of the Foul Raid he returned to his old project, this time in partnership with the Duke of Albany, who lent the authority of the Scottish government to what remained essentially a private business venture. With the support of other Scottish lords they set about creating the only full-time professional army to be raised in Scotland before the seventeenth century and selling it to the French.

The first approach to the French was made at the end of 1417. An agent was sent with a proposal to John the Fearless, whom Douglas had known of old. But the discussions only began to make progress in the spring of 1418 when Griffin Young, titular Bishop of Ross, arrived in France from Constance as one of Pope Martin V's legates to Scotland. Young was a natural conspirator already well known at the French court. An Oxford-educated Englishman of Welsh ancestry who had served as Owen Glendower's chancellor at the height of his power, he had conducted at least two missions to

Paris on behalf of the Welsh nationalists before accepting employment as a roving diplomatic agent of the Duke of Albany. He was shortly joined in Paris by Albany's private secretary Andrew Hawyk (or Habilly) and one of his councillors, John Lethe, who had often been employed on delicate diplomatic missions for the Scottish government. In June 1418 they negotiated an agreement with John the Fearless. The Scots promised to provide a large force of men-at-arms and archers to fight against the English in France in return for an advance of 30,000 *livres*. But the political ground was shifting even as the negotiations occurred. By the time agreement was reached the Burgundians had recovered possession of Paris and the Dauphin had fled to the Loire. When Young left France for Scotland in September the ordinances of Niort had been published and the Dauphin had begun to set up his rival government.

The Duke of Albany sensed that a better offer might be available. He sent another embassy to the court of the Dauphin with the suggestion that he might care to hire the Scottish army himself. We have very little information about this mission. All that is known is that the Dauphin's councillors seized the opportunity with both hands. A French embassy was sent to Scotland to pursue the project. Its leader was John Crannach, a Scottish clergyman naturalised in France who had passed most of his adult life at the University of Paris and was then serving as a judicial officer in the Dauphin's household. He arrived in Scotland at about the beginning of 1419. He must have been there at the same time as the Duke of Burgundy's emissaries who had come to finalise the details of their own treaty.

The Scots continued to negotiate with both sides for several months. But they had made their decision by February 1419. A general council of the realm met, probably in February. The assembly resolved to back the Dauphin. It is possible that Charles was prepared to pay more. But the most plausible reason for the Scottish decision is that Albany and Douglas were troubled by the growing signs that John the Fearless might be preparing to ally himself with the English. They may even have thought, like so many committed Dauphinists, that he already had. In the middle of March the Earl of Douglas's cousin and neighbour William Douglas of Drumlanrig arrived at La Rochelle with an advance guard of 150 men-at-arms and 300 archers to join the 200 or so Scottish archers already in the Dauphin's service. The Dauphin's ambassadors in Scotland probably returned to France in the same ships. They brought with them the promise of a Scottish contract army commanded by the Duke of Albany's nephew, Alexander Stewart Earl of Mar, the most powerful territorial magnate in north-east

Scotland. An experienced soldier, admiral and diplomat who had fought at Othée and jousted in Paris, Mar was the one Scottish captain apart from Douglas himself with a European reputation. We do not know how many men Mar promised to bring but it must have been in excess of 6,000, which was substantially the whole military capacity of Scotland. They were to embark for France as soon as the Dauphin could find the shipping to carry them.[28]

With only one port under his control, at La Rochelle, there could be no question of the Dauphin finding the shipping from his own resources. The plan was to acquire the necessary transports and escorts from Castile, the only friendly maritime power on Europe's Atlantic seaboard. The Dauphin was fortunate in his timing. Fernando de Antequera, the main architect of the country's rapprochement with England, and his fellow regent Catherine of Lancaster, Henry V's aunt, were both dead. Castile's relations with England had sunk to a new low. Open war had broken out in the Channel and the Bay of Biscay.[29] In the summer of 1418, in the aftermath of the Burgundian coup in Paris, the Castilians had recognised the Dauphin as the true representative of France and agreed to supply a galley fleet for the first time in fifteen years. The decision was submitted to the Cortes at Madrid in September. After 'much altercation' the assembly made a generous grant to defray the heavy mobilisation costs. Early in the following year the Castilians were reported to be arming twenty-two war galleys and eighty ships and barges for the Dauphin's service.

For some time it remained unclear how these powerful naval forces would be used. As yet the question of transporting a Scottish army had not arisen. The English King's council in Bordeaux received intelligence that the Castilians intended to invade Gascony over the Pyrenees and lay siege to Bayonne by land and sea. At Rouen Henry V thought that the ships were more likely to be deployed like earlier Castilian war fleets against the Solent ports and English shipping in the Channel. The French ambassadors stayed in Castile awaiting developments. As soon as the Dauphin received the news of the promised army of the Earl of Mar he sent a fresh embassy to join them. Its leading members were Bernard Campion, the head of the Dauphin's household, and Robert de Braquemont, a much admired figure in Castile with good contacts at the royal court, who had fought with the Castilians against John of Gaunt and had served as the Admiral of the Trastámaran kings. Their instructions were to divert the Castilian fleet to Scotland.[30]

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On 16 March 1419 the conference between Henry V and the

Burgundians opened in the castle of Rouen. The discussions were veiled in secrecy owing to the Duke of Burgundy's fears about the damage that would be done to him if they became known. The Duke of Brittany acted as joint mediator with the Earl of Salisbury. Regnier Pot represented John the Fearless, supported by a delegation which included several of his most influential councillors. The Earl of Warwick led the English team. Henry V remained in the background, presiding at plenary sessions 'proud and arrogant as a lion' according to a well-informed French source. He made his position brutally clear. He would accept nothing less than the full execution of the terms agreed at Brétigny in 1360 plus everything that he had conquered in France since August 1417. The Burgundians had already rejected these terms at Pont-de-l'Arche the previous December and Regnier Pot and his colleagues did not have authority to agree them. But they quickly realised that there was no other basis on which the English would negotiate. So they agreed to return to Mantes on 30 March armed with their government's decision on the point.[31]

The English King expected that by then he would know where he stood with the Dauphin. In the event he did not. The Scottish government's promise to send an army to France reached the Dauphin in the third week of March at the castle of Montargis east of Orléans. Bernard Campion and Robert de Braquemont received their instructions on 22 March 1419 and left for Castile at once. The Dauphin was due to meet Henry V between Evreux and Dreux four days later on 26 March. The Dauphin's councillors, fortified by the news from Scotland, decided to cancel the meeting. With the prospectof a Scottish army, they believed that they could do without the English King's dangerous friendship. Henry V arrived at Evreux in good time. But the Dauphinist commissioners who were supposed to fix the precise venue failed to appear. Instead it was Regnault de Chartres who came before King Henry to tell him that the Dauphin had decided not to attend. No explanation was proffered and no alternative date was proposed. The English King was outraged. The Dauphin had made a fool of him. 'Cirtes alle the ambassadors that we dele wyth ben yncongrue,' wrote one of his entourage to the clerk of the council at Westminster; 'that is to say yn old maner of speche in Englond they ben double and fals, with which maner of men I prey God lete never no trewe man be coupled with.'[32]

Henry was a proud man who did not like to be slighted. He immediately repudiated the truce with the Dauphin and within days the fighting had resumed across the whole southern march of the duchy of Normandy. The Duke of Gloucester appeared outside Ivry-la-Bataille, the strongest fortress of the Eure, which was garrisoned

by the Dauphin's troops. The town was taken by assault on 1 April. The castle entered into a conditional surrender agreement ten days later. Other English columns laid siege to La Roche-Guyon and Château-Gaillard on the Seine. La Roche-Guyon was an austere keep standing on a man-made chalk cliff over the great bend of the Seine between Mantes and Vernon. It was garrisoned by over a hundred men under the command of the formidable Perrette de la Rivière, daughter of Charles V's famous minister, whose husband had been killed at Agincourt together with almost all her male relatives. Her garrison inflicted heavy casualties on the troops of the Earl of Warwick, who had been assigned to take the place. But Warwick found a network of caves and tunnels from which the walls could be undermined. Guy Le Bouteillier, the former French captain of Rouen, is said to have told him where they were. Guy received his reward when the castle fell after less than a month and Henry granted it to him. Guy offered to marry Perrette Bureau but she spurned him and left for Dauphinist France. Apart from Gisors there now remained only the immense Château-Gaillard, perhaps the greatest fortress in France, where Olivier de Mauny held out for another six months with just 120 men against an English column commanded by the Duke of Exeter.[33]

Henry V never again tried to negotiate with the Dauphin. Instead he determined to do the best deal he could with the Duke of Burgundy. On 30 March 1419 the Earl of Warwick received three emissaries of John the Fearless in the austere square keep overlooking the Seine at Mantes. They brought with them Charles VI's confirmation that he was prepared to negotiate on the basis of Henry's terms: implementation of the treaty of Brétigny, the transfer to Henry of all his recent conquests in France, a marriage between the English King and Catherine of France and an alliance against the Dauphin and his partisans. Once the English King's councillors had satisfied themselves on this point the discussions were adjourned to the town of Vernon where Henry V had now arrived. There it was agreed that peace terms would be finalised at a personal meeting on 15 May between Henry and the French King outside the town of Meulan on the Seine. On the French side it also would be attended by the Queen, the Duke of Burgundy and Princess Catherine. A truce between the English and Burgundian forces was agreed. It was to last until two weeks after the conference had closed, and to extend from the Loire to the march of Calais. The atmosphere at Vernon was convivial and optimistic. Writing to the council at Westminster, one of Henry's entourage reported that the King was full of the praises of John the Fearless, the 'principal worker in this matter', referring to him once more as cousin 'as he was wont to

do'. There were high hopes of the forthcoming conference, 'by which assembly and coming together me supposeth to have peace and an end of this war, which God for his mercy send grace that it be so'.[34]

The Dauphin's councillors responded to the threat of an Anglo-Burgundian alliance with a skilful combination of violence and diplomacy. A substantial mounted force was collected around Orléans and another, north of the Seine, in the Beauvaisis. Their role was to harass the communications between the English and Burgundians and threaten the area where the conference with Charles VI was due to be held. The Duke of Clarence took the greater part of the English army north to counter the concentration of Dauphinist troops in the Beauvaisis, wasting much of the region to deprive them of the means of supplying themselves. South of Paris the Dauphinists ranged freely, meeting very little opposition. The Earl of Warwick, travelling across the plain of Brie with an escort of 200 men to settle the preliminaries of the conference with the Duke at Provins, found himself attacked by a large mounted force under Tanneguy du Châtel and forced to fight for his life.

At the same time the Dauphin revived the earlier negotiations with the Parisians. He invited them to send their ambassadors before him. These approaches may or may not have been sincere. Their main object was to raise the political pressure on John the Fearless and make it more difficult for him to justify an agreement with the English. In this they were entirely successful. Morale in Paris was low. The Dauphinists had recently captured Beaumont on the Oise and Soissons on the Aisne and were besieging Senlis, thus closing the main routes by which supplies had been reaching the city from the north. By comparison the Duke of Burgundy's own military operations seem to have been confined to protecting the area around Provins where his court was based. The Parisians pressed the Duke to send ambassadors to the Dauphin's court. He had better make peace with the Dauphin, they said. Otherwise the English would. The Duke, who depended on Parisian support, was forced to agree.[35]

A meeting between the councillors of the two men was set up for early May. Meanwhile the Burgundians put off their summit meeting with Henry V, first for a week and then for two. In the fortress of Melun the Duke of Burgundy's councillors, the Dauphin's men and the representatives of the city of Paris met in an atmosphere of glacial distrust. The Dauphinists made no secret of the fact that they regarded John the Fearless himself as the main obstacle to agreement. They believed that his dishonesty had been responsible for the failure of earlier peace treaties and that his

ambition made cooperation impossible. He could have his settlement, they said, if only he would withdraw from the government of France, abandon his control over its finances and allow the Dauphin to deal with his parents on his own terms without interference. But the Dauphinists could hardly insist on this line. They were desperate to stop the forthcoming conference at Meulan. The combination of the English and the Duke of Burgundy would be too strong for them. So they spun out the talks in spite of their unpromising beginnings. The conference was adjourned to Orléans, closer to where the Dauphin was staying. The Dauphin's councillors proposed a long truce during which the two sides could unite against the English before sorting out their differences. Three years was suggested. The Burgundians would have none of it. It would have put an end to their negotiations with Henry V, which offered them their best bargaining counter and their only prospect of total victory. The Dauphinists came down to two years. The Burgundians said no. Finally a three-month truce was agreed, just long enough to accommodate the Duke's conference with the English.[36]

The long-delayed Anglo-Burgundian summit finally opened at Meulan on 30 May 1419. Meulan was a small town on the right bank of the Seine marking the outer limit of English-occupied territory. It had been captured by them in February but the important fortified bridge remained in the hands of a Burgundian garrison. The site of the conference was a large meadow by the Seine between the walls of the town and the hamlet of Mézy. The ground had been staked out in advance. The security arrangements, which were in the hands of the marshals and heralds, had been agreed down to the last man-at-arms. At the eastern end of the meadow, in front of the town gate, three tented pavilions had been erected for the King of France, the Queen and the Duke of Burgundy, protected by a broad water-filled trench and a high wickerwork screen. At the opposite end the English had set up their pavilions by the riverbank behind their own barriers. On each side stood lines of heavily armed troops, 2,000 on each side. Between the lines of soldiers was a palisaded enclosure with three entrances, each guarded by fifty soldiers. Within the palisades there was a large common pavilion for the main meetings, with two smaller tents for private conferences.

The rituals of diplomacy had been carefully choreographed. At one o'clock precisely the English King arrived from Mantes with his attendants. At two o'clock the Queen and the seventeen-year-old Princess Catherine arrived from Pontoise, carried in gorgeous decorated litters to fanfares of trumpets. Charles VI was not with

them. He had suffered a serious relapse that morning at Pontoise which left him unable to go through even the outward forms of kingship. It was therefore the Queen who presided on the French side. At exactly three o'clock Henry V and his brothers and Isabelle and the Duke of Burgundy emerged simultaneously from their quarters. Each side walked slowly towards the other accompanied by sixteen councillors, thirty knights and thirty squires. They met at a post in the centre of the enclosure. Henry and Isabelle embraced. The Duke of Burgundy, who had last met Henry at Calais in 1416, acknowledged him stiffly with a barely perceptible flexing of the knee and inclination of the head. Then Henry and Isabelle processed arm in arm into the central pavilion, taking their places on thrones draped with gold cloth twelve feet apart, while the crowd of bishops, ministers, advisers, heralds, noblemen and ladies-in-waiting filed in behind them. The Earl of Warwick, who had taken the leading role in setting up the conference, came forward, knelt before the Queen and, addressing her in French, announced the business of the conference. The rest of the day would be given over to confirming the truces and the next plenary session would be in two days' time, on 1 June. Sounding the first jarring note, Warwick declared that Henry had no time to waste and the whole thing had better be over within a week. As far as the King was concerned the main points had all been conceded already.[37]

In fact the conference lasted for five weeks. This was a profoundly frustrating experience for Henry, who was impatient of ceremony and hated blather. Altogether there were eight plenary sessions at Meulan, marking the formal stages of the conference. But most of the negotiation occurred behind the scenes at informal meetings in the town of Meulan or in messages and papers carried back and forth between Mantes and Pontoise. The occasion attracted extraordinary interest among contemporaries and generated an ocean of indiscretion, gossip and speculation among the crowd of participants, hangers-on, busybodies and spies. On 31 May the Queen and the Duke of Burgundy repeated in the English King's presence the undertaking that their ambassadors had first given two months before to concede the King's minimum territorial demands. In return Henry undertook that he would renounce all his claims to the French throne. Over the following days, however, it became clear that the parties understood the bargain in different ways. Henry thought that he had been promised the territories in full sovereignty as they had been ceded at Brétigny, 'not from the King or Crown of France but from God alone'. The French ambassadors denied this. The Queen and the Duke had not intended to concede the principle of sovereignty, they said. Moreover they

could not undertake to deliver possession of the territories ceded at Brétigny because most of them were occupied by the Dauphin. As for Henry's renunciation there was much lawyerly quibbling about its exact form. Many days were wasted in fruitless explanations and demands for clarification.[38]

The real reason for the delay was that the Burgundians were arguing among themselves. Many of them thought that it would be better to settle with the Dauphin than to accept Henry's terms. They were supported by some of the Queen's household. One of them was Jeanne du Peschin dame de Giac, a great favourite of both the Duke and the Dauphin and one of the few remaining links between their two camps. Jeanne, who had a son on John's council and a brother in the Dauphin's household, emerged as one the strongest advocates of a reconciliation between them. The Dauphin's councillors were well informed about these tensions and proved adept at exploiting them. In the course of the conference Tanneguy du Châtel and Arnaud-Guilhem de Barbazan arrived secretly at Pontoise. Tanneguy was even smuggled into the French pavilions at Meulan to witness the scene. He and Barbazan told the Duke and the Queen that their master was genuinely anxious to make peace and encouraged them to believe that compromise was still possible. The Duke called for advice from two of his councillors, the lawyer Nicholas Rolin, a rising figure on the Burgundian council in Paris, and Jean Rapiout, one of the chamber presidents of the Parlement of Paris. They disagreed. Rolin was for making a treaty with the King of England even at the cost of conceding all that Henry was demanding. His reasons were those which had pushed John the Fearless along this course ever since the fall of Rouen. The English were too strong, he argued. It was doubtful whether the Duke and the Dauphin could defeat them together but they certainly could not do so separately. Whatever they did Henry V would continue to occupy Normandy and sooner or later some kind of deal would have to be done with him. The later they left it the more territory Henry would conquer and the more exorbitant would be his demands. Not even Paris could be counted on any more. If the war continued its citizens might submit to the English as those of Rouen had done. If Rolin's was a politician's advice, Rapiout's was a lawyer's. Much of it was a refutation of Henry V's legal claims. Whether or not it was politic to concede them was not the point in Rapiout's view. He did not think that it was legally possible. Charles VI himself probably had no power to alienate French territory. It was clear that no one else could do it while he was incapacitated.[39]

John the Fearless hesitated, unable to make up his mind. He had always intended to explore what the Dauphin was prepared to offer

before closing with the English and for a time he tried to keep both options open. He told the Dauphin's agents at Pontoise that he would accept their master's invitation to resume their talks. A conference between their councillors was arranged, by the good offices of the dame de Giac, at Corbeil south-east of Paris. Nicholas Rolin left at once with her son Pierre de Giac to sort out the preliminaries.

At Mantes Henry V soon learned that the Dauphin's agents had been at Pontoise and guessed what was going on. On 30 June there was an ill-tempered plenary session in the pavilion outside Meulan. Henry took John the Fearless aside. He did not care to be strung along like this, he said. He knew that they were talking to the Dauphin. John would have to choose whom he would rather deal with. According to the chronicler Monstrelet, who probably got it from the Duke's councillors, Henry told John that he 'would have Catherine's hand and all that he had demanded with it, or throw them all out of France, the Duke of Burgundy included'. The Duke, touching on a more sensitive nerve than he realised, is said to have replied that Henry's resources would be exhausted long before he could do that. Henry responded by producing a long memorandum summarising the years of diplomatic evasion as he saw them. Under the protocol governing the conference it was due to continue until agreement was reached or either party gave a week's notice to bring it to an end. Henry V now gave the week's notice. Unless they had conceded his demands by then he would walk out and resume the war as soon as the truce expired.[40]

Faced with this ultimatum the French royal council met to decide what to do. There is no reason to doubt the Queen's own account of what happened, written some weeks later in a letter to Henry V. According to Isabelle she and the Duke were entirely satisfied with Henry's terms and if it had been left to them would have accepted them. But the council, although full of Burgundian placemen, was unwilling to lose the chance of an accommodation with the Dauphin. They were adamant that they must await the outcome of the discussions then in progress at Corbeil. 'We were deceived by the crooked wiles of our son's faction,' said Isabelle. If she and John had overruled their council, she wrote, every nobleman and town in the land would have deserted them and joined the Dauphin. So they decided to tell Henry's representatives that they would concede his demands but continue the talks with the Dauphin all the same. This duplicity proved more difficult to manage than they expected. As soon as the English received their assurances they called for them to be reduced to writing. The Duke was obliged to put them off with various unconvincing excuses. He professed to find their drafts

‘vague, irrational and obscure’. The English became increasingly fed up as the French spokesmen came back with what a weary English clerk called ‘diverse demandes and questions in lettyng and tarying of that matere’. On 5 July Henry V sent the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Earl of Warwick to Pontoise with a large delegation of his councillors to bring matters to a conclusion. The Duke of Burgundy promised them an answer by 19 July and sent them away empty-handed. Early on 7 July he rode over the bridge of Meulan, accompanied by the dame de Giac, a crowd of Burgundian noblemen and a mounted escort several hundred strong and made for Corbeil. The Queen remained at Pontoise and the English court at Mantes. The workmen came to take down the tents. No one knew what would happen next. ‘At this tyme it is nat knowen whether we shall have werre or pees,’ wrote the clerk to his colleague at Westminster.[41]

A week earlier the Dauphin’s ambassadors successfully completed their negotiations with the Castilian council in the Alcázar of Segovia beneath the crests of the Sierra de Guadarrama. A fresh treaty was sealed. The Castilians agreed to furnish forty ships with an average capacity of 150 tons, each with a full crew and a complement of six men-at-arms and a hundred crossbowmen. The fleet was to sail as soon as possible from Santander to Belle-Île off the Morbihan coast of southern Brittany to await its final orders before proceeding to Scotland to embark the army of the Earl of Mar. The whole enterprise was expected to take three months and to cost the Dauphin 119,400 francs in war wages and freight charges. The Dauphin’s emissaries professed to have no idea when he would be in a position to pay these sums. So the Castilians agreed to allow him open-ended credit, accepting a pledge of all his movable wealth as security. Within three weeks the English knew the whole plan. A Castilian ship bound for La Rochelle was taken at sea by the men of Bayonne. On board they found one of the Castilian King’s private secretaries with a satchel of documents disclosing everything.[42]

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The Duke of Burgundy met the Dauphin under a menacing sky on the evening of 8 July 1419. The scene was an open meadow outside the castle of Pouilly-le-Fort by the main road from Corbeil to Melun. A pavilion had been improvised by draping tapestries and embroidered silks from the trees. On either side hundreds of armed men were drawn up in battle order, fingering their weapons. It was the first time that the sixteen-year-old prince had met his terrible cousin for at least six years. The Dauphin was accompanied by his

closest advisers: Robert le Maçon, Jean Louvet, Tanneguy du Châtel and Arnaud-Guilhem de Barbazan. The negotiations continued for several hours before breaking up at eleven o'clock at night. The Dauphin and his councillors were reported to be very pessimistic. Three days of exchanges between councillors, travelling daily between Corbeil and Melun, failed to resolve the impasse. We do not know what the points of difference were, but the main one is likely to have been the vexed question of the Dauphin's return to his father's court, which had been the prime demand in all of their exchanges to date but was anathema to the prince's advisers. On 11 July the principals returned to Pouilly for a final meeting. The talks were on the verge of breaking down when the dame de Giac intervened. She went to each of them in turn to push them into a compromise. After an hour they reached agreement. A shout of 'Noël!' went up which could be heard across the meadow. The two principals shook hands, embraced and exchanged a kiss of peace. Their attendants raised their fists in the air. The Duke gave the Dauphin a jewelled brooch. The Dauphin presented him with a valuable warhorse.

The terms, which were reduced to writing and published by the Dauphin that very day, were very simple. After the ritual formulae of affection and forgiveness they provided for the Dauphin to return to his father's court and for the two men to work together to restore the standing of the Crown and expel the English from France. Over the following days more terms were agreed and embodied in a supplemental instrument providing for an amnesty, the mutual restoration of confiscated property, the transfer of cases pending before the Parlement of Poitiers to Paris, the procedures for appointing officers of state and the clearance of the garrisons installed by the rivals across France. Once all these matters had been resolved, the Duke and the Dauphin spent three days together at Corbeil making plans and exhibiting their new-found alliance to the world. A start was made on the recruitment of an army and a date fixed in a month's time for the Dauphin to return to court and join in operations against the English. All across France there were celebrations in the streets. John the Fearless was delighted, as well he might be. He sent to the money-changers of Paris for 10,000 francs in cash to distribute among the Dauphin's councillors. Arnaud-Guilhem de Barbazan refused to take it. He 'never took money from any one but his master', he said. The others were happy enough to accept the Duke's largesse. But for most of them the peace represented a serious setback. They had had to agree to the conference at Corbeil in order to frustrate the Duke's negotiations with the English. But the result had been to expose the

Dauphin to John's powerful personality and to bring about the very thing that they had striven to prevent since the previous summer.[43]

The Duke of Burgundy returned to Pontoise where the King and Queen were waiting. Shortly after his arrival, on about 19 July, an English delegation arrived led by the Earl of Warwick. The English knew of course about the discussions at Pouilly and realised that their bargaining position was weaker than it had been. They brought with them a new proposal for a territorial settlement. Its terms have not survived but it evidently represented a retreat from the more extreme demands made by Henry V at Meulan. The answer that they were given by the Queen and the Duke was not at all satisfactory. It consisted in a copy of the peace of Pouilly, followed by a request for another month in which to make up their minds. By that time, they said, they expected that the Dauphin would have returned to his father's court. It would then be possible to complete their negotiations with the English King with a united government behind them. This breathtakingly dishonest assurance, which was contradicted by the very terms of the peace of Pouilly, cannot have impressed the Earl of Warwick. He had come armed with power to extend the truce with the Burgundians which was due to expire on 29 July. As it was, he decided that there was no point. At Mantes Henry V reached the same conclusion. 'Forasmoch as our adverse partie wol noo pees nor accord have with us, but finally have refused al meenes of pees,' he wrote to the Londoners, 'we be compelled ayein to werre thorough thair default.' On 23 July the French court left Pontoise and, shunning Paris, installed itself temporarily at Saint-Denis.[44]

Before dawn on 31 July 1419 the English came over the walls of Pontoise from scaling ladders. They had reconnoitred the defences while the French King had still been there. When the truce expired they marched through the night under the command of Gaston de Foix Captal de Buch, timing their assault to coincide with the changing of the watch on the walls. The sentinels were knifed. The gates were opened. The alarm went up too late. An estimated 3,000 English troops poured into the town, spreading through the streets with cries of 'Saint George!' and '*Ville gagnée!*' The garrison had all taken billets in the town. As a result they were dispersed across Pontoise and the castle was undefended. The Burgundian captain, Jean de Villiers lord of L'Isle-Adam, threw on his clothes and went out into the streets wearing no more than a cuirass and a helmet to try to rally them. But the soldiers were already in full flight. Finally L'Isle-Adam mounted the walls crying 'All is lost! Every man for himself!' The inhabitants, rising terrified from their beds, grabbed some clothes and anything valuable within reach and poured onto

the streets. The English passed through the streets killing everyone that they met and invading the houses in search of loot. A tidal wave of refugees crammed through the gates encumbered with baggage and children. They flowed along the roads north and east out of the town, their numbers swollen by the inhabitants of the villages in their path. On the Beauvais road the fugitives encountered bands of *routiers* employed by the Duke of Burgundy who robbed them of their money and valuables. Much of the garrison stumbled into a second column of English troops approaching the town under the Earl of Huntingdon and were captured. The rest fled down the Paris road.

It was the feast of St Germain, one of the patron saints of Paris. Much of the population was at church or preparing to enjoy the holiday when the first fugitives reached the gates. Twenty or thirty exhausted people appeared. They had run for four hours in the hot July sun. They were terrified and exhausted. Some of them were wounded. 'We have come from Pontoise,' they said; 'the English took it this morning.' The cleric who recorded the daily life of the city in these years witnessed the scene at the Porte Saint-Denis:

> The gatekeepers looked out towards the village of Saint-Lazare. There were great crowds approaching, men, women and children, some injured, some half-naked, some carrying two children in their arms or on their backs. There were women with no hoods. Some of them had just a petticoat or shift. There were poor priests, bareheaded with nothing on but a shirt of a surplice. As they ran by they wept, moaned and cried. 'Lord, by thy grace keep us from despair!' they sobbed; 'this morning we were at ease in our homes and now it is but midday and we are exiles begging for our bread.' As they blurted out these things some of them fainted. Others sat on the ground exhausted and miserable. Many had lost blood or had carried their children and could move no further. It was a very hot, oppressive day.

At Saint-Denis the Queen and the Duke of Burgundy abandoned their dinner, hurriedly packed their baggage and fled for the bridge at Charenton taking the King with them. From there they made for Lagny on the Marne and shut themselves behind its walls.[45]

'They have wonne the forsaid toun by assaulte, thanked be God, through the which wynninge my said lord hath passage to Paris,' wrote the Duke of Clarence to the Londoners. Pontoise was the western barbican of the French capital. It controlled the main crossing of the Oise in the Paris region. It was now clear that the city would be Henry V's next major objective. In the first half of August Clarence led a series of mounted raids across the plain north of the city, occupying castles and other strongpoints, menacing Saint-Denis and making feints against the walls and gates. Other English columns penetrated north into the Beauvaisis and the march of Picardy. These were old-style *chevauchées* aimed at destruction

rather than conquest. They were intended to force the Duke of Burgundy back to the negotiating table. In the Île de France discipline broke down among the garrisons of the Duke and the Dauphin. Both sides embarked on fresh rounds of violence along the roads leading to the capital. They were joined by the free companies of Bretons and Gascons looting for their own account. The grain and wine harvests were lost. The depopulation and destruction of the Île de France reached its worst point. Prices rose to record heights with grain selling in Paris at sixty times its level of 1415. 'This is not war but low criminality,' wrote the Dauphinist poet Alain Chartier, 'unashamed violence under the guise of soldiering, brutal rape licensed by the collapse of justice and the failure of law.' Paris was more or less abandoned to its fate while the Queen and the Duke of Burgundy cowered behind the walls of Lagny with most of the available troops around them. The Marshal Claude de Chastellux was sent with some of these troops to defend Saint-Denis. But there was virtually no professional garrison in Paris itself and no experienced commander there. The Captain of Paris was the Duke's inexperienced fifteen-year-old nephew Philip of Saint-Pol whose first instinct was to take refuge with his uncle on the Marne. The Duke of Burgundy's stock plumbed new depths in the city that had once received him as a hero.[46]

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The Dauphin's councillors never accepted the peace of Pouilly. It took more than a week of conviviality and a shower of largesse to erase a decade of distrust. Much that John the Fearless did in the weeks after the Dauphin left Corbeil was calculated to intensify their distrust. They naturally learned about the Earl of Warwick's last mission to Pontoise and were convinced that John had double-crossed them. They accused the Duke of dragging his feet over the withdrawal of his garrisons from the castles of the Somme and the Oise. They were outraged when reports reached them that the Duke had given orders excluding the Dauphin and his supporters from Paris. By early August 1419 there were signs that the Dauphin's councillors were resisting the implementation of the peace. They declined to stop the operations of the Dauphinist garrisons around Paris or allow the passage of goods through to the capital. Tanneguy du Châtel, who controlled the garrison at Meaux, refused to allow the Duke and the King and Queen to cross the bridge over the Marne through the town.[47]

The main concern of the Dauphin's councillors was the prospect of the prince returning to his father's court and rejoining his father's council, as he would have to do if he was to take part in the

promised joint campaign against the English. This would inevitably result in his coming under the control of the Duke of Burgundy. It would entail the end of his self-proclaimed regency and the dissolution of his alternative government. From the Duke of Burgundy's point of view this was the main point of the treaty. A succession of messages was sent to the Dauphin in the King's name urging him to rejoin his parents. They became ever more insistent. A delegation of the city of Paris headed by Philippe de Morvilliers arrived to add their own entreaties. The Dauphin's followers were beginning to think about their future. For some of them, old partisans of Orléans and Armagnac, there was no future in a government largely controlled by the Duke of Burgundy. Others, whose past was less compromised, were already receiving messages from John the Fearless offering them offices and pensions under the new joint government. Some of them had accepted. Many others were tempted. Although the Dauphin repeatedly put off his return to court, his councillors observed with alarm that his support was already beginning to drain away.

On 8 or 9 August 1419 Tanneguy du Châtel came before the Duke of Burgundy at Provins accompanied by a delegation of the Dauphin's councillors. They brought with them an alternative proposal. The Dauphin, they suggested, would stay away from the French court but send his representatives to sit on the royal council and his officers to help organise the campaign against Henry V. This did not suit John's plans at all. He wanted not just the Dauphin's support but the Dauphin himself. He rejected the idea out of hand. He rejected it again the following week when the court was at Troyes and the emissaries returned to press the point. The Duke's insistence on the return of the Dauphin left the latter's councillors in a quandary. One possibility was for him to repudiate the peace of Pouilly as he had repudiated the peace of Saint-Maur. But if this was ever considered it was quickly discarded. The Dauphin had personally put his seal to the terms. The loss of face and of political support would have been very damaging. Public expectations were high. Troops were already being recruited for the campaign across Dauphinist as well as Burgundian France.[48] It was against this background that a more extreme option emerged. Some of the Dauphin's closest collaborators decided that the only way out was to kill the Duke of Burgundy and get rid of him once and for all.

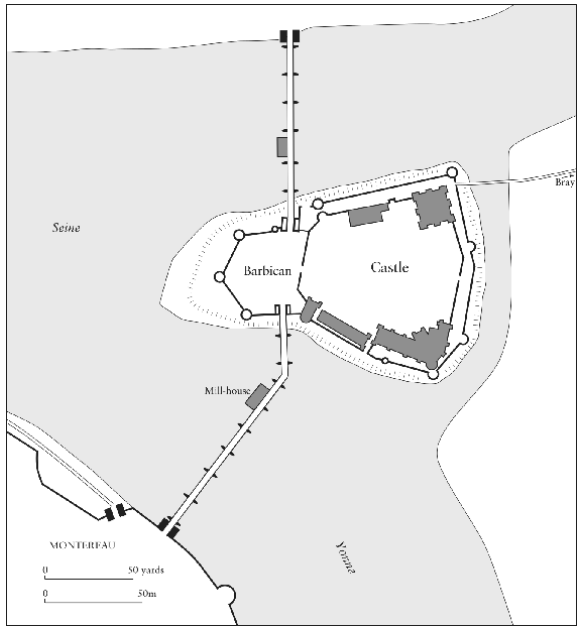
Characteristically the idea had originated with Jean Louvet. In July 1419, shortly before the Dauphin's second meeting with John the Fearless at Pouilly-le-Fort, Louvet had suggested at a meeting of the Dauphin's council that they should take advantage of the occasion to 'seize and execute' the Duke. The Dauphin's chancellor

Robert Le Maçon and his first chamberlain Arnaud-Guilhem de Barbazan were horrified. As the lord of Barbazan pointed out, it was impractical anyway. John never went anywhere without a large bodyguard. Tanneguy du Châtel agreed and the proposal was dropped. In the course of August, however, Louvet won Tanneguy round. Others probably required little persuasion, especially among the former retainers of the house of Orléans. The Burgundians later identified them: Guillaume Bataille, a veteran of Louis of Orléans' wars who had gone on to serve his widow and son after his murder and had led the unsuccessful Armagnac mission to England in 1411; Robert de Lairé, the captain of Montargis where the Dauphin was staying in mid-August 1419; the Gascon captain François de Grignaux, who had fought against the Burgundian mobs during the June days in Paris. They were joined by old associates of Bernard of Armagnac like his kinsman Guillaume II of Narbonne; and by ambitious young men in the Dauphin's household like Pierre Frotier and Olivier de Léer, hotheads who wanted to be more than junior equerries. In about the third week of August Louvet and Tanneguy du Châtel brought the Dauphin into the plan. They persuaded him to invite the Duke of Burgundy to a meeting on home ground where he could be done to death. Louvet insisted that nothing should be said to Robert Le Maçon. He was bound to be against it and was better left in ignorance.[49]

One of the Dauphin's chamberlains was sent back to Troyes. He appeared before John the Fearless and told him that before the Dauphin would agree to return to court they must have a further meeting. They needed to discuss how they were going to cooperate in government, how appointments would be made, how the campaign against the English would be conducted. The meeting, they said, would have to be held somewhere where there was no danger of the Dauphin being abducted in a sudden *coup de main*. The Dauphin's stronghold at Montereau was suggested. John the Fearless had lived in constant fear of assassination for years. He had misgivings about attending a conference in such a place. It was the dame de Giac who finally overcame them. She persuaded him to agree in the interests of uniting France against the invader, an act which later led to unwarranted suspicions that she too had been in on the plot. On about 21 August John the Fearless finally agreed to come to Montereau. The meeting was fixed for the 26th. The Dauphin left for the town at once, arriving on about 24 August. There the final decision was made at a fateful meeting of the Dauphin's council. We do not know who was present except that they included Louvet and Tanneguy du Châtel but not Robert Le Maçon or the Bishop of Clermont. They were kept at a safe distance,

eight miles away at the castle of Diant. John the Fearless failed to appear on the appointed day. There had been persistent rumours of a plot against his life, which may have originated in the indiscretions of some of the plotters. As a result he did not leave Troyes until 28 August, two days after the appointed date. He then advanced nervously to Bray-sur-Seine, ten miles from the fortress, and paused there for nearly a fortnight while an elaborate protocol was negotiated to ensure his safety.[50]

Montereau-Fault-Yonne was a powerful fortress built by the counts of Champagne at the beginning of the thirteenth century and enlarged and refortified in the course of the fourteenth. It stood on a spur of rock at the confluence of the Seine and the Yonne, one of the nodal points of the river system of the Île de France. On either side a long timber bridge on stone piles crossed each river. The bridges were guarded at their extremities by massive moated gatehouses and met in the middle at a large barbican projecting into the water from the lower ward of the castle. On the opposite bank of the Yonne stood the modest town of Montereau. Under the terms agreed between the Dauphin's officers and the Duke's the meeting was to take place on the bridge which joined the castle to the town. Custody of the castle was to be temporarily surrendered to the Duke of Burgundy's men while the Dauphin would hold the town. In the middle of the bridge an enclosure was to be constructed with a timber barrier at either end, each with a single opening, guarded on the castle side by the Duke of Burgundy's guards and on the town side by the Dauphin's. Each of the principals was to enter the enclosure from his own side, accompanied by only ten men, whose names were to be disclosed in writing in advance. All eleven men on each side were to swear an oath to observe the peace of Pouilly and another that there would be no foul play. They were to be allowed mail shirts and swords but no other armour or weapons. The guards at the barriers were to be unarmed.[51]



13 The bridge of Montereau, 10 September 1419

On 10 September 1419 John the Fearless rode out of Bray accompanied by the dame de Giac and an escort of about 400 men-at-arms. In the town of Montereau the Dauphin's council met to swear the oaths that had been required of them. Robert Le Maçon, who had been summoned from Diant the previous afternoon, was present. An outsider, the Bishop of Valence, who attended the meeting on business of his own, saw the Dauphin take his chancellor aside at the end of the meeting and tell him something that clearly shocked him. According to the Bishop's account, written seven years later, the two men were seen arguing, Le Maçon protesting and the Dauphin cutting him short and walking off, calling on him to follow. Le Maçon did not follow. He remained in the council chamber and sank onto a couch at the side of the room. 'I wish that I had never met my lord,' he told the Bishop, 'for I am very much afraid that he has been ill-advised and is about to do something today by which he and the whole realm will be ruined.' Then he called for his horses and announced his intention of leaving. It was early afternoon. A few miles away the Duke of Burgundy's cavalcade had arrived within sight of the great rectangular keep of the castle. They stopped in a meadow to receive a report from three of their number who had been sent ahead to make a discreet check on the preparations at the bridge. Their report was not reassuring. The barriers on the bridge seemed unnecessarily strong, they said. The Duke could easily be trapped in the enclosure, unable to summon help from outside. Some of his

councillors shared their concern. There was a hurried conference in the saddle. The Duke declared that he would have to take the risk. The party advanced towards the castle.[52]

At five o'clock in the afternoon Tanneguy du Châtel came before John the Fearless to tell him that the Dauphin was waiting for him. The Duke, dressed in scarlet robes and covered in jewels, left the castle by the water barbican and walked onto the bridge accompanied by his ten designated companions and his private secretary, Jean Seguinat. They approached the barrier. Their oaths were taken there by one of the Dauphin's officers. Then they entered the enclosure. The Dauphin was seated at the far end with his own companions. They included all the principal plotters. What happened next was recounted later by Seguinat. He had been the last to pass through the barrier. Tanneguy du Châtel, who was standing by the entrance, pulled him by his sleeve to hurry him through. The entrance was then closed and locked behind them. John the Fearless advanced towards the Dauphin, removed his velvet cap and bowed low to the knee. He made a little speech of greeting. The Dauphin came forward and raised him with his hands. He told him that he had spoken well and invited him to replace his cap.

At this point Louvet approached the Dauphin and whispered in his ear. Both men looked at Tanneguy du Châtel. According to Archambaud de Foix Tanneguy took an axe from his robes and shouted 'This is the traitor who has deprived you of your inheritance.' At once the cry went up 'Kill! Kill!' The barrier on the Dauphin's side was opened and armed men poured in from the direction of the town. Archambaud de Foix, standing beside the Duke, grabbed Tanneguy's axe, but Tanneguy wrested it free and swung it into his head, felling him to the ground. Then he turned on John the Fearless and struck him a heavy blow with the axe between the shoulders. Robert de Lairé seized the Duke from behind and held him by the sleeves while a large man with brown hair (this was Guillaume Bataille) came up and struck him repeatedly on the right side of the face with the blade of his sword, almost severing the Duke's wrist as he tried to shield himself against the blows. Tanneguy struck him a second time with his axe, this time smashing his jaw and forcing him to the ground. Several others joined in. Finally the equerries Olivier de Léer and Pierre Frotier knelt over the prostrate man and plunged a sword into his belly. He stirred briefly, let out a long groan and then was still.

The Burgundian troops outside, alerted by the noise, were trying to force their way past the barrier into the enclosure. They were supported by others who had been in the castle. But they were

driven back by artillery which the Dauphinists had sited in front of the barrier, and fired on from behind by bowmen concealed in a millhouse between the barrier and the castle. Hundreds more Dauphinist soldiers posted on the other side of the Seine rushed across the Seine bridge to join in the fray. By this time the whole of the Burgundian company in the enclosure had been rounded up by the Dauphin's men, apart from Archambaud de Foix, who was lying mortally wounded on the ground, and Jean de Neufchâtel, who managed to jump the barrier and escape.

The body of the Duke lay in the middle of the bridge covered in blood. Someone pulled the rings from his fingers and the jewelled collar from his neck. Then they stripped him of his cloak and mail tunic and dragged him to the gatehouse at the town end. On the following day a cart was commandeered to take the body to the church of Notre-Dame in the town. A grave was hurriedly dug, a wooden coffin found and the body thrown into it, still in its clothes. Twelve years after his death Louis of Orléans was avenged. 'You cut off my master's hand and I shall cut off yours,' the old Orléanist Guillaume Bataille claimed to have screamed as he brought down his sword on the victim.[53]

Jean Louvet and Tanneguy du Châtel were well rewarded for their advice and meticulous preparation. Shortly after the murder Louvet received generous grants of land and lordships in the Dauphiné, accompanied by an adulatory citation recording his outstanding loyalty and lofty qualities. He and Tanneguy du Châtel became the dominant figures on the Dauphin's council and both received large pensions for the rest of their lives. Some of the Dauphin's other councillors were dismayed. Robert Le Maçon had walked out when he learned what was afoot. He heard the cries from the bridge floating across the water as he left Montereau by the Yonne gate. Arnaud-Guilhem de Barbazan was listed by the Dauphin among his chosen companions but claimed at his subsequent trial to have arrived on the scene just after the murder. He probably knew more than he admitted about the plan, but he was a chivalrous man and there was no doubt about his hostility to the whole enterprise. He accused the Dauphin to his face of risking the destruction of his crown, and had no words harsh enough for his colleagues. 'You have destroyed the honour and standing of your master,' he told them. For both men the murder marked the beginning of their eclipse by more ruthless politicians. But their words proved to be prophetic.

The murder of John the Fearless was an egregious folly. For France it was a tragedy on an epic scale. After three years of toying with the dangerous possibility of allying himself with Henry V of

England, the murdered man had finally recognised that the only way that he could hope to extend his influence beyond Paris and the northern towns was to make common cause with the Dauphin against the English. His death finally put a end to this prospect and inaugurated a blood feud between the Dauphin and the house of Burgundy that would last for sixteen years. More than a century later, in July 1521, Francis I was shown the broken skull of John the Fearless at the Carthusian monastery of Champmol outside Dijon where he was eventually reburied. The gash left by Guillaume Bataille's sword could be clearly seen. 'By that hole,' his guide said, 'the English entered France.'[54]

Notes

1
Beaucourt, i, 347, 418–19, *473–4.

2
Tours: 'Geste des nobles', 172; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 354, 355; *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 990–1; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 293. Parthenay: Ledain, 177–80; *Preuves Bretagne,* ii, 991–3; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 360–1.

3
Baillis: Demurger, Appendices; ibid., 226–7, 274–5, 291, 292–3, 296 for Burgundian nominees in Beaucaire, Limousin, Rouergue; Boudet (1906), 87–94. Bourbonnais: Leguai (1969), 322–5.

4
Foed., ix, 643.

5
Richard, 88–92, *94–7. Bonnay: Demurger, 234; *Gall. Reg.*, iv, nos 14533–46. Saulx: AD Côte d'Or B11942/37; *Chauvelays, 249–53.

6
G. de Valous, *Le patriciat Lyonnais aux XIII^e^ et XIV^e^ siècles* (1973), 42–5; Déniau, 284–329, 334–5, 339–69, *624–5; *Caillet (1909 [1]), 302–5, 315–16; R. Fédou, *Les hommes de loi Lyonnais* (1964), 268–9, 339–42. Lafayette: *Caillet (1909 [1]), 304; BN Clair. 841, pp. 529–64. La Guiche: *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, nos 4286, 4292 (on him, Demurger, 260–1; BN Fr. n.a. 20028/124). Dealings with Dauphin: *Beaucourt, i, 439–41, 443–4; *Reg. Cons. Lyon*, i, 144–5.

7
*Beaucourt, i, 35n3 (messenger).

8
Dognon (1889), 435–42; Dognon (1895), 240–3.

9
Companies: Wolff (1954), 51–2; Tarde, *Chron.*, 166–7; *Jurades de Bergerac*, i, 216; *Ann. MS Limoges*, 289–90; AD Hérault A1/178; *Compayré, 264; *Vaissète, x, 1983–4. La Réole: AD Hérault A1/172; *Arch. Hist. Gironde*, x, 560–2; Vaissète, ix, 1037–8, *x, 1983–4, 2049–50; *Arch. Hist. Gironde*, vii, 347–8; *Compayré, 263–4; *Cartul. Carcassonne*, v, 356; PRO E364/55, m. 5 (Clifford); *Reg. Jurade,* ii, 348. Relief: PRO E101/186/1 (2, 3, 4, 5). La Réole was in English hands in 1420, when it was again besieged: *Reg. Jurade*, ii, 385, 402, 411–15, 417, 418. Tiptoft: PRO E365/51, m. 1–1d (Tiptoft).

10
Ord., x, 430, 493–4; Besse, *Recueil*, 385; *Inv. AC Toulouse,* i, 489 (AA37/43); Wolff (1954), 73; Dognon (1889), 444–5, *496–8, *500.
11
Ord., x, 429–34; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, 4140, 4166–7, 4283–6, 4434; *Déniau, 620; *Compayré, 264–5; Dognon (1889), 449; *Petit Thalamus*, 467; Vaissète, ix, 1041–2. Sen. Carcassonne: Demurger, 246.
12
*Vaissète, ix, 1040, 1043–4, x, 132–3, 1984–8, 2057–8; Dognon (1889), 444, 450, 453, 470–1, *498–9; Besse, *Recueil*, 208–10. Velay, etc.: *Beaucourt, i, 440 (Velay); Vaissète, ix, 1050–1; *Preuves Polignac,* ii, no. 304; Médicis, *Chron.*, i, 234–5; Régné, ii, 237–9.
13
Ord., x, 449–50; Besse, *Recueil*, 204–7; *Vaissète, x, 1985–8, 1989, 1991–2; Dognon (1889), 460–5. Orange was appointed Captain-General on 29 Aug.: BN Lat. 9177, fols 211–14.
14
Dognon (1889), 453–4, 461; *Flourac, 243; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, no. 3905. 'Cunning': Bernis, 'Chron.', para. 141.
15
*Flourac, 244–7; BN Clair. 841, pp. 571–2 (Abp. Reims); Dognon (1889), 457–8, 467, 468, 470–1, *499; *Dépenses*, nos 365, 403; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, no. 3905. Southerners at Chinon: *Vaissète, x, 1990; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 292–3.
16
Dognon (1889), 465–7, 469, 474–5, 475–82; Besse, *Recueil*, 253–8 (date: BN Lat. 9177, fols 199–202vo). Murat: *Dépenses*, no. 304. Garrisons: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 376; Vaissète, ix, 1063–4.
17
Dépenses, nos 1273, 1277. Carcassonne: Raoulet, 'Chron.', 171.
18
Foed., ix, 687–9, 692–4, 701.
19
Money: Newhall (1924), 240–2; *Proc. PC,* ii, 350–1; *Orig. Letters*, II. i, 83. Strength: Newhall (1924), 209n. Letters: *A. Collins, viii, 106–7; *Orig. Letters*, II. i, 78 (misdated). Losses: Newhall (1924), 214–15. Deserters: PRO C64/9, m. 31d, 22d, 15d; C64/10, m. 30; C64/11, m. 38d, 30d, 7d, 5d; *CCR 1419–22*, 6–7.
20
Manpower: Goodwin, 214, citing BL Cotton Caligula D V (original lost); *Orig. Letters*, III. i, 607; *Proc. PC*, ii, 246–8; Goodman. Gascony: *Foed.*, ix, 794–5; *Livre des établissments*, 351; *Dos cron. Vizcaya*, 143; Add. MSS 4602, fol. 53; BL Cotton Caligula D V (gaps supplied from Add. MS. 38525, fols 92–92vo).
21
Comptes E. Bourg., i, nos 42–4, ii, nos 4283–4390; *Dépenses*, nos 701–2, 705, 707, 709–12, 715–16, 720–2.
22
BN Clair. 43, p. 3219; *Journ. B. Paris*, 120–1, 122–3; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, 252–5, 256–64, 269–70, 277; *Foed.*, ix, 722; Besse, *Recueil*, 264–75, 291–4.
23
Neville (1998), 108–13; Balfour-Melville (1936), 50–3, 58–9, 61–2, 64–8;

M. Brown (1998), 111–16.

24

Low reputation: Froissart, *Chron.* (SHF), xi, 280–1; AD Nord B1894, fol. 48 ('wild Scots'). Humbleton Hill: *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 330; Walsingham, *Hist. Angl.*, ii, 251–2. Mercenaries: *Chron. R. St-Denis,* iv, 152; Schnerb (2005), 260–1; **Cop. S. Andree*, 236–7; AD Côte d'Or, B1570, fol. 292; BN Fr. 20528, p. 192; BN Clair. 100/30; AN X1a 4791, fol. 21; BN Fr. 32510, fol. 355; BN Clair. 56, p. 4286; 841, pp. 635–6.

25

Truces: *Foed.*, viii, 737–8, ix, 60; *Exch. R. Scot.*, iv, 238. Raids: Hardyng, *Chron.*, 373; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 82–4; PRO E404/30/141, 31/224; *Proc. PC*, ii, 145–8, 155–8; *Foed.*, ix, 217, 222–3, 299; *Northern Petitions,* no. 120; *CPR 1413–16,* 371, 381.

26

'Foul Raid': *Foed.*, ix, 307, 310 (both misdated 1415); PRO E403/630, m. 13 (20 Sept.); Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 86; St *Albans Chron.*, ii, 720–2; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 162–4; Hardyng, *Chron.*, 380–1; Otterbourne, *Chron.*, i, 278–9. Damage: *CFR 1413–22*, 235–6; *Cal. Doc. Scot.*, iv, no. 484 (referring to French troops). Exeter: Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 163; Cal. *Signet L.*, no. 812. Defence of march: *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 224; *Cal. Doc. Scot.*, iv, nos 879–80, 892, 895, 900, v, no. 953; R. A. Brown et al., ii, 569–70, 820–1; *Foed.*, x, 113–15 (compare *Proc. PC*, ii, 14–17).

27

Roxburgh: Hardyng, *Chron.*, 381–2. Douglas: Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 80–2; *Cal. Doc. Scot.*, iv, no. 834; *Itin. Jean*, 398, 399; AD Nord B11937; Plancher, iii, 373; *Choix de pièces,* i, 364–5.

28

Negotiations with John: *Dépenses*, no. 345, cf. nos 78, 181, 344, 347, 356, 360, 366, 371–2, 443, 628; *Itin. Jean,* 446. On Young: See above, pp. 124, 144, 562, and Emden, iii, 2134–5. He was back in Scotland by 2 Oct.: *Cop. S. Andree*, 9; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 88. Negotiations in Scotland: *Beaucourt, I, 332–3; *Suarez Fernandez, 169; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 112; *Dépenses*, nos 366, 371–2, 443, 843, 864–5; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, nos 131–2, 164, 371–2; *Itin. Jean*, 446–7. On Crannach: D. E. R. Watt, 118–22. Douglas of D.: BL Cotton Caligula D V, fol. 58 (report from Bordeaux, 21 Mar., gaps supplied from BL Add. MSS 38525, fols 76–76vo); BN Clair 841, pp. 721–5 (muster at Mehun-sur-Yèvre, 27 May). Other Scots: BN Clair 841, pp. 635–6; BN Fr. 32510, fol. 355. Promised army: *Beaucourt, i, 332–3 (the Dauphin was evidently disappointed by the 6,000 who actually came: BN Fr. 25710/3). On Mar: *ODNB*, lii, 620–2; Wyntoun, *Orig. Chron.*, vi, 422–4. Shipping: *Suarez Fernandez, 169–71.

29

Proc. PC, ii, 208–9; PRO E101/48/12, 13.

30

*Suarez Fernandez, 168–71; *Coll. Doc. Murcia,* xv, nos 263, 265; Santa Maria, *Crón.*, 155–6; BL Add. MSS 38525, 92–92vo (from BL Cotton Caligula D V, now lost); *Anthology Chanc. Eng.*, no. 51.

31

Foed., ix, 722–3, 788–9; *Lettres des rois*, ii, 369–70; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 362; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 314.

32

Castile: *Suarez Fernandez, 169–71. Braquemont died near Toledo on 4 April: Rucquoi, 408. Evreux: *Foed.*, ix, 789; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 209–10;

Cron. Norm., 48; *Orig. Letters*, II. i, 77.

33

Ivry: BL Add. MSS 38525, fols 94–5, from BL Cotton Caligula D V (original lost); PRO C64/11, m. 78d; *Rôles Normands,* no. 140 (misdated 1418); Livius, *Vita*, 72; BN PO 525/Brodon/4–5; 1280/Garennes/4–5; 1467/de Hallot/3–4, etc. (garrison). La Roche-Guyon: Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 211–12; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 310–12; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 357; *Cron. Norm.,* 48; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 337; PRO C64/11, m. 65 (numbers). The castle surrendered before 1 May 1419: BL Add. MS 38525, fol. 88, from BL Cotton Caligula D V (original lost). Ch.-Gaillard: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 337–8; *Cron. Norm.*, 49, 193; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 241–3.

34

Foed., ix, 723, 723–7, 732–6, 789; *Lettres des rois*, ii, 372–3; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 362–3. Letter: BL Add. MS 38525, fols 87–8, from BL Cotton Caligula D V (original lost).

35

Operations: *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 987–8; BN Clair. 841, pp. 681–5, 690–8; BL Add. MS 38525, fols 87–8, 94–5 from BL Cotton Caligula D V (originals lost); Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 213–15; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 267; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 312–13; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 316–18; *Dépenses*, nos 722, 788. Provins: *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, no. 44, ii, no. 5497. Parisians: Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 287–8; 'Lettere Lucchesi', 193.

36

Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 361–2, 363; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 300; *Foed.*, ix, 746–9, 753; *Beaucourt, i, 125n6; *Mém. France et Bourgogne,* i, 251–4.

37

Foed., ix, 751–3, 759; BL Add. MSS 38525, fol. 94, from BL Cotton Caligula D V (original lost); Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 364–6 (the best-informed source); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 318–20; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 268–70; *Brut*, ii, 423–4; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 217–24. Meulan: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 310, 312; *Gall. Reg.*, iv, nos 14854, 15043; *Dépenses*, no. 686.

38

Foed., ix, 789; *Lettres des rois*, ii, 371; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 366; *Cron. Norm.*, 50.

39

Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 366–7; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 270–1; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 321, 322. Barbazan and Tanneguy: BN Fr. 5061, fols 108vo, 115vo. Dame de Giac: AN KK49, fols 48, 52vo; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, no. 186, ii, nos 3621, 4041; *Dépenses*, no. 293, 969–70; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 332.

40

Foed., ix, 779; *Lettres des rois*, ii, 368–72, esp. 371; Chronicle accounts: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 366–8 (fullest); 'Chron. Cordeliers', 270–1; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 321–2. Corbeil: *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, nos 3586–7, 3932; *Dépenses*, nos 1163, 1330, 1476F.

41

Foed., ix, 774–6, 779, 789–90; Chaplais, *Eng. Med. Dipl. Prac.*, no. 240 (e) (pp. 460–2); *Beaucourt, i, 186–7 (Queen's letter); *Itin. Jean*, 448–9; *Dépenses*, no. 721; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 367–8; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 322.

42

*Suarez Fernandez, 168–75; *Foed.*, ix, 783–4.

43

AD Nord B313/154142; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 328–34; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 322–3, 330–1; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 271; *Itin. Jean*, 449; *Mém. France et Bourgogne*, i, 255–8, 272; *Ord.*, xi, 15–16, xii, 263–7; *Beaucourt, i, 187;

*Bonenfant, 189 [5]; *Dépenses*, no. 1476D; 'Livre des trahisons', 143. Largesse: *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, no. 4041; BN Fr. 5061, fol. 116vo. Recruitment: *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 988–9.

44

Foed., ix, 782–3; *Bonenfant, 196 [1, 2]; *Beaucourt, i, 186–7; *Coll. doc. Angleterre*, no. 353; *Itin. Jean*, 449.

45

Coll. doc. Angleterre, nos 343–4; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 309; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 332–4; Waurin, *Rec. cron.*, ii, 273–5; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 368; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 348–54; 'Fragment Gr. Chron.', 222–3; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 227–32; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 740–2; *Journ. B. Paris*, 126–8; *Itin. Jean*, 449.

46

Clarence letter: *Coll. doc. Angleterre,* no. 344; cf. *Foed.*, ix, 790. Raids: Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 231–2; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 354, 362; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 311, 312; *Journ. B. Paris*, 128–9; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 334–6. Paris: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 356–60, 362–6; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 277; Fourquin, 314–15; Chartier, *Quad. Invect.*, 27; *Itin. Jean*, 449.

47

*Beaucourt, i, 181–2; *Bonenfant, 189 [6]; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 368–70; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 277; *Dépenses*, no. 1476H.

48

*Beaucourt, i, 182, 187; *Bonenfant, 201 [7]; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 368–70. Missions to Provins and Troyes: *Bonenfant, 201–2 [7]; *Mém. France et Bourgogne,* i, 306; *Itin. Jean*, 450. Recruitment: *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 988–9; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, 3936, 3949.

49

*Beaucourt, ii, 654 (deposition of Tanneguy, 25 July 1425); *Mém. France et Bourgogne*, i, 306–7 (articles of accusation against Barbazan, denied by him at his trial in 1424, see BN Fr. 5061, fol. 117vo); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 345, iv, 18. Bataille: Gonzalez, App., 31–5. Lairé: Gonzalez, App., 337–8; Demurger, 267–8; *Gall. Reg.*, iv, nos 15661, 15741; *Beaucourt, ii, 656 (Dauphin at Montargis). Grignaux: Gonzalez, App., 263–5; Demurger, 259. Frotier, Léer: Beaucourt, i, 351n.

50

*Beaucourt, i, 187, ii, 654, 656; *Mém. France et Bourgogne*, i, 307; Plancher, iii, 518–19; BN Coll. Bourgogne 58, fol. 15 (arrangements for John's escort); Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 317; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 370. John's movements: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 370–2; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 369–70; *Itin. Jean*, 450.

51

Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 92; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 369, 371; *Mém. France et Bourgogne*, i, 281–2, 283–5, 288.

52

*Beaucourt, ii, 654, 656–7; *Mém. France et Bourgogne*, i, 287–8; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 340–1.

53

The account in the text is based on (i) five detailed and circumstantial eye-witness accounts collected by the subsequent Burgundian inquiry (*Mém. France et Bourgogne*, i, 271–86), from Jean Seguinat, Bertrand de Navailles (recording the account of Archambaud de Foix on his deathbed), Guy de Pontailler, Guillaume de Vienne and Antoine de Vergy, which are plainly

not collusive and contain synoptic differences and omissions that rule out a propagandist purpose; (ii) the report of an anonymous Burgundian official who visited the scene after the murder and interviewed people in the town (ibid., i, 286–7); (iii) two accounts by the Duchess of Burgundy, one to the Duchess of Bourbon (ibid., i, 287–9), the other to the Chambre des Comptes of Dijon (*Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, no. 3951), adding details derived from officials in the castle. I have rejected, where they differ from these, the mutually inconsistent accounts given by the Dauphin on 11 and 15 Sept. (*Mém. France et Bourgogne*, i, 298–9, *Beaucourt, i, 181–3) and by his ambassadors to the Pope (*Lettres des rois*, ii, 355–8), as well as the standard Dauphinist narrative in Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 370–2. These accounts, which put forward the theory of an altercation followed by a scuffle provoked by John appearing to reach for his sword, in the course of which he was killed, have been adopted by most French historians, but they are demonstrably inaccurate on some points and implausible on others. They must also be read in the light of the incontrovertible evidence of premeditation in the dossier comprising depositions from Tanneguy, Louvet and the Bishop of Valence, assembled in 1426 when the Dauphinist councillors fell out and Robert Le Maçon obtained letters patent from the Dauphin (now King) exonerating him on the basis that the advice had come from others (*Beaucourt, ii, 653–8). The chronicles add little of independent evidential value, but Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 343–4, identifies some of those who struck the blows, and Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 373, records Bataille's boast. The evidence is expertly summarised in Vaughan (1966), 274–86. Burial: Schnerb (1982), 124, 125, *129.

54

Beaucourt, i, 208, *ii, 653, 654, 657; L. Mirot (1942), 201–3; *Mém. France et Bourgogne*, i, 282, 284. Barbazan: BN Fr. 5061, fol. 117 (corroborated by *Mém. France et Bourgogne*, i, 286); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 347. Guide: cited in Vallet de Viriville (1862–5), i, 184.

CHAPTER XVI

The Treaty of Troyes, 1419–1420

The first garbled reports of the murder of John the Fearless reached Troyes on the morning of 11 September 1419 and Paris a few hours later. The details were still unclear. The only one of the Duke's companions to escape from the enclosure on the bridge at Montereau was Jean de Neufchâtel and he initially believed that John was a prisoner. As fresh reports arrived and it became clear that he was dead there was a spasm of panic and fear across northern France. No one knew what would happen next. In Paris the dead man's difficult relations with the city in the final months of his life were forgotten as men put on mourning black or sewed St Andrew's crosses to their tunics and requiem Masses were sung in the churches. The captains of the watch appeared fully armed in the streets, fearing a repetition of the massacres of the previous year. At a tense meeting in the chamber of the Parlement, all the officers and leading citizens swore to avenge the death of the Duke of Burgundy. Lists of suspected Dauphinists were compiled quarter by quarter and those identified put under close surveillance. Some of them were driven out of the city. Some were reported to have been executed. Similar scenes were enacted in other towns. 'Divisions and commotions' were reported everywhere. In one provincial town those who had 'belonged to the party opposed to the Duke of Burgundy and his holy struggle' were disarmed and confined to their houses. The roads emptied as travellers feared to venture outside the walled places.[1]

The dead man's widow, Margaret of Bavaria, threw herself at once into a campaign of revenge. She sent delegations of her councillors to Troyes and Ghent with demands that the killers should be brought to justice. She appealed for support to the Pope, to Sigismund in Germany, to the leading princes and free states of western Germany, to the Dukes of Lorraine and Savoy and the King of Navarre. A barrage of propaganda was directed to the walled towns of France. In the ducal palace at Dijon clerks worked through the night writing letters laying out the Burgundian version of the events leading up the murder. Work was begun on preparing criminal charges against the Dauphin's chief accomplices and a dossier of supporting evidence. For years to come the house of

Burgundy's political activities in France would be directed mainly to the pursuit of the blood feud unleashed by the murder of John the Fearless. 'This is no time for grief, tears or lamentation', the University of Paris wrote to the Duchess, 'but for hard work to remedy this monstrous and cruel murder and determined resistance to its evil, damnable and treacherous perpetrators.'[2]

John the Fearless's sudden disappearance from the scene left a power vacuum which was not easy to fill. The government was awkwardly divided between Paris and Troyes. The courts and the principal administrative departments were in Paris, where the teenage Count of Saint-Pol presided over a division of the King's council dominated by Burgundian stalwarts. Real power in the city, however, belonged to the citizenry. They had the power of the mob behind them. In addition they controlled the only regular source of revenue, for the municipality had taken an assignment of the profits of the Paris mint which was used to pay the wages of Saint-Pol's troops and the salaries of the civil service. As a result the representatives of the royal government there became increasingly identified with the interests of the city and its angry population. The Parlement assumed a prominent political role under its ambitious and autocratic First President, Philippe de Morvilliers. Most of the industrial towns of the north which had supported John the Fearless looked to Paris for leadership. In the course of September and October 1419 Philippe de Morvilliers and other commissioners from Paris toured many of these towns distributing copies of the oath of loyalty sworn by the Parisian leaders after the murder of the Duke and persuading others to subscribe to it.[3]

The Queen was isolated at Troyes. Surrounded by a threadbare court, she presided over a smaller division of the royal council and a modest administration. But although Isabelle was in theory the sole source of constitutional authority for all the institutions of the Burgundian sector of France, in reality she had no more than a power of obstruction. She lacked the political following and the resources to impose her will. The King's council in Paris acted more or less independently of her. There were few professional troops in Troyes and the treasury was empty. Indeed it was far from clear that she would be able to maintain herself there. As the dead duke's erstwhile ally, Isabelle was intensely hated by the men around the Dauphin, a fact of which she was well aware. Her first thought was that the murder of John the Fearless must be the opening move in a carefully planned *coup d'état*. She expected the Dauphin's armies to appear at any moment outside the walls of Troyes to claim possession of the King and put her away somewhere as the last Armagnac government had done. So she turned for help in the only

possible direction, to the house of Burgundy. A delegation was sent to Philip of Charolais in Flanders urging him to come at once to Troyes with his troops. Urgent messages were sent to the Duchess Margaret at Dijon calling on her to send help without delay. The Marshal of Burgundy left at once for Troyes with 600 mounted men and 6,000 *livres* in cash and negotiable instruments.[4]

John the Fearless's heir Philip Count of Charolais received the news of his father's murder at Ghent on 13 September 1419. It had been carried there from Troyes by a mounted messenger covering seventy miles a day and brought into his chamber by his councillor Jean de Thoisy. Philip was stunned. Unable to speak, he threw himself onto his bed, grinding his teeth and uttering terrible cries. For several days he was incapable of attending to business. The new Duke of Burgundy was twenty-three years old in 1419. A gangling, handsome, pleasure-loving man of conventional notions, he was very different from his father. He was a poor administrator, uninterested in finance and impatient of bureaucratic detail. He enjoyed dancing, feasting, jousting, hunting and fornication. He partied through the night. He loved luxury. His court would one day be celebrated across Europe for its combination of cultivation and showiness. Philip was able to combine these distractions with the effective government of his vast domains only because of the well-oiled governmental machine created by his father and grandfather and because he was a shrewd judge of subordinates with an outstanding capacity to delegate. But if Philip lacked John's intense seriousness and single-mindedness he also lacked his abrasive ways, vindictive outlook and capacity for making enemies. He was readier to listen to advice than his father had ever been and proved to be a subtler and more flexible politician. He disliked military life, preferring to employ competent captains than to take the field himself. He pursued his wider objectives by negotiation rather than violence. This fairly reflected where his talents lay. He was a mediocre soldier but an excellent diplomat.

There was another important difference between father and son. Philip did not share his father's obsessive ambition to control the government of France. It was obvious by 1419 that the days when the princes of France could use their political power at the centre to pillage the resources of the monarchy were over. For the moment the tax base of the French state had been wrecked by the civil war and by John the Fearless's reckless abolition of the *aides*. There was nothing more to be stolen. In the longer term Charles VI, whose incapacity had made the pillaging possible, was unlikely to live much longer. Philip was the first of the four Valois dukes of Burgundy whose attention was mainly focussed on his own domains

and in particular on the rich provinces of the north. He had governed Flanders and Artois since he was fifteen years old, leaving his mother to govern the two Burgundies and his father to attend to affairs in France. Almost all of his reign would be passed in the Low Countries. He was at home in Bruges and Ghent and later in Brussels, the cities which served as the political and ceremonial capitals of the Burgundian state during his reign. He spent comparatively little time in France and hardly any in Paris. The Burgundian dynasty's new centre of gravity was marked at the outset of his reign. Instead of rushing to Paris or Troyes in answer to the Queen's summons, he concentrated on securing his succession in Flanders. He toured the Flemish towns and had himself installed in each of them in turn as their count. He summoned a conference for 8 October at Mechelen with his kinsmen and allies in the Low Countries: his cousins John Duke of Brabant and Jacqueline Countess of Hainaut and the rulers of Liège, Cleves and Namur. He did not leave his own domains until February 1420.[5]

Henry V saw the implications of the murder at once. 'I shall now surpass all my ambitions,' he is reported to have said. His claim to the crown of France had hitherto been a mere bargaining counter to be surrendered in exchange for an acceptable territorial settlement. Suddenly it became a realistic aspiration. One of his rivals was dead, the other discredited. There was now no prospect of combined action against the English by the two sides in the civil war. Since neither of them was strong enough to confront the English on its own it was all but inevitable that one or the other of them would have to come to terms with him. Henry calculated that he would be able to dictate his own terms. Much would depend on political sentiment in the northern provinces, and especially in the civil service and among the population of Paris.

Opinion among these groups was undergoing a fundamental change in the aftermath of John the Fearless's death. They had hitherto regarded the English as the chief enemy. The Parisians had been the prime movers in the attempts to pressure the two sides into making common cause against the invader. In June 1419, at the time of the conferences of Meulan, the Queen and the Duke of Burgundy had been convinced that they would suffer a massive haemorrhage of support if they did a deal with the English. Things looked very different now. For many Frenchmen living in regions which were not under the Dauphin's control there could be no question of acknowledging the young prince as regent or allowing him to succeed his father on the throne. It would merely prolong the divisions of France. Besides, the Dauphin was the tool of a vulgar clique of extremist politicians, and was either a murderer or

manipulated by murderers, it hardly mattered which. Yet if the Dauphin was disqualified, who else was there? The only French prince with a plausible claim was Charles Duke of Orléans, who was next in line to the throne after the Dauphin. He was currently held in the Lancastrian fortress of Pontefract in Yorkshire. Henry wrote to his councillors in England instructing them to tighten the security at Pontefract and withdraw the prisoner's parole to wander beyond the walls. His escape 'might never have ben so harmful nor prejudicial unto us as it might be now'.[6]

It dawned on many people that a deal with the English King was the only way to bring an end to the civil war. In about the middle of September 1419 the King's council in Paris and the leading citizens of the capital met to consider the situation. The consensus of those present was that an agreement with the King of England was the least of the various evils open to them. The citizens of Paris were strongly in favour of it. The noblemen in the city, all of them Burgundian partisans, agreed. They thought, said the chronicler of Saint-Denis, that such an alliance was in the national interest of France. There was 'no other way to put a stop to the destructive raids of the English, to suppress the venomous violence of the Armagnacs and to avenge the ignominious and lamentable murder of the Duke of Burgundy'. So on their own authority they sent an embassy to Henry V to open preliminary negotiations for a peace treaty and to press for a truce in the meantime. It was led by the Marshal, Claude de Chastellux, accompanied by two other Burgundian noblemen and two representatives of the city of Paris. It is clear that what they had in mind was an alliance of the kind which had been discussed between John the Fearless and Henry V earlier in the year. The Queen does not seem to have been consulted in advance about this initiative. But she adopted it and wrote a personal letter to Henry from Troyes, inviting him to resume the negotiations at the point where they had been left at the time of the Earl of Warwick's visit to Pontoise at the end of July.[7]

It soon became apparent that the English King had very different ideas. Henry received the Parisian delegation outside Gisors, where his army had just captured the town and was in the process of besieging the Burgundian garrison holding out in the citadel. Henry told them that the situation had been transformed by the death of John the Fearless and that negotiations would now have to proceed on a completely new basis. He wanted the crown. He made a carefully framed proposal to them which he would stick to for the next eight months. He proposed that he should marry Catherine of France without a cash dowry. He was vague about the arrangements for the government of the kingdom while Charles VI still lived but

the inference (confirmed later) was that Henry himself would rule as the King's lieutenant or regent during his lifetime and then succeed him after his death. These proposals were accompanied by statements calculated to soften the initial resistance which was expected from the French. Henry did not intend, he said, that France should become an English possession or that Frenchmen should become English. On the contrary, the French would remain true Frenchmen. What he proposed was a dual monarchy. Each kingdom would retain its own institutions and would remain autonomous. The only links between them would be that they would be allies, 'neighbours and brothers' under the same King. Henry justified his plan in the interests of France. He pointed to the savagery of the Dauphin's partisans, the damage done by their operations and the divisions which they perpetuated. He intended, he said, to revive the fortunes of France cast low by civil war. He would 'apply his whole resources to protecting of the crown, kingdom and people of France, conserving and restoring its former honour, status, rights and liberties, treating the whole population as his loyal subjects and defending them against their enemies and all who seek to do them harm'.

As Henry had anticipated, the French delegation was taken aback by these demands. But the Parisian ambassadors were impressed by what they saw at Gisors. The English King received them in the midst of his army. Discipline in the English camp struck them as impeccable. The siege lines, which completely surrounded the town, were a formidable sight. The citadel surrendered on 23 September 1419 while the ambassadors were there. Henry's pride was obvious. But he was also extravagantly courteous to his visitors. He showered them with gifts, put on lavish banquets in their honour and spoke affably to high and low alike. Most of all they were impressed by Henry's direct manner. Instead of the flowery orations which were normal on such occasions he would go straight to the point and answer their proposals with a clipped decisiveness: 'That is unacceptable,' or 'Yes, if possible.' On their return to Paris at the end of September they reported that Henry was a prince who could be expected to control his troops and honour his promises. They were accompanied on their return by an English embassy charged with following up the discussions begun at Gisors. The composition of the embassy was itself a commentary on Henry's proposals at Gisors. Its leaders were the Earl of Warwick and an ambitious newcomer to the royal administration, John Kemp Bishop of Rochester. But half of its eight members were Normans, among them Guy Le Bouteillier sporting his new title of lord of La Roche-Guyon. They arrived in Paris on 27 September.[8]

Henry V's emissaries were received at least twice by the Count of Saint-Pol and the whole royal council in Paris. The councillors carefully avoided committing themselves to anything, but the wide-ranging discussion with the English ambassadors revealed much about the developing state of opinion in the Burgundian camp. The Earl of Warwick presented them with a written memorandum of the King's proposals at Gisors. Their immediate reaction was that Henry V should be content with the terms that had been discussed at Meulan and Pontoise. 'That was then,' said Warwick, adding that Henry planned to 'revive the crown of France, not to diminish it'. The French councillors had obviously expected this answer and proceeded to detail. They pointed out that there could be no question of deposing Charles VI, who had been on the throne for many years and was held in great affection for all his disabilities. The Englishmen confirmed that that was not what Henry had in mind. Charles would remain King and would be honourably treated for as long as he lived.

Turning to the succession, the councillors took it for granted that the Dauphin's involvement in the murder of John the Fearless ruled him out as the next King of France, the first time that this point had been openly made. But they suggested that as the King's next closest male relative the new Duke of Burgundy had the best claim. Warwick declared that Henry was determined to assert his own hereditary right. But there would be a treaty of alliance with the Duke of Burgundy and he would see to it that Philip would have a proper share of the resources of the French kingdom.

The rest of the discussion was about Henry's reliability as an ally against the Dauphin. Could they count on him to take decisive action against the Kingdom of Bourges, they asked, once he was married to the Dauphin's sister? Would it not be better to marry a sister of Philip of Burgundy? Henry was determined to marry Catherine, the English replied, but he would be his own master and not the stooge of his wife. He had unmarried brothers who could marry Philip's sisters to seal the Anglo-Burgundian alliance. Would Henry really share their determination to wreak revenge on the murderers of John the Fearless? Of course, came the answer. He would reduce all rebels to his obedience. What about the vast domains that the English King had confiscated in Normandy? That would be dealt with in the detailed terms of the treaty, said the English; Burgundians and loyal subjects of the King could rest assured that they would have their property restored or receive compensation.[9]

The councillors in Paris had no authority to agree to anything other than a local truce, as they explained to their English

counterparts. Everything else had to be referred back to the Queen and the new Duke of Burgundy. Henry V was determined to keep up the military pressure on them while they reflected. With the English armies only twenty miles from the capital and the Duke of Clarence's raiding parties roaming over the plain of Saint-Denis, the Parisians were desperate for a truce. Henry initially refused outright, at any rate unless the French agreed to negotiate on the basis of his terms. He then relented and agreed to a cease-fire but only until 11 November and on condition that it excluded all of his immediate military objectives west of Paris. In about the middle of October 1419 the Burgundian garrison holding the fortified bridge at Meulan surrendered to the English after a short siege. The capture of the bridge was a disaster almost on a par with the loss of Pontoise. It opened up the whole of the region south-west of Paris to the English army and enabled it to advance on the city along both banks of the Seine.

Behind the walls of the capital morale was low. The autumn was rainy and bitterly cold. There was hardly any firewood to be had. Dairy products, vegetables and grain were obtainable only at unheard-of prices. Men were having to do watch duty on the walls for two or three shifts a week. Under the pressure of events the young Count of Saint-Pol was rapidly maturing into a capable politician. On 22 October, shortly after the fall of the bridge of Meulan, he sent an emissary to Philip of Burgundy with a candid report on conditions in the city. The food situation was deteriorating rapidly. Much of the population was starving. There were 'murmurs' in the streets which might turn to violence at any time. The people were insisting on a treaty with the English which would enable them to 'live in peace and eat'. Their demands could no longer be ignored. There were reliable reports that several towns of the Île de France had already decided to surrender to the English without a fight, and in Saint-Pol's view the Parisians might well do the same if Henry V appeared outside their gates. Henry, he believed, was well aware of the mood in Paris and had every intention of taking advantage of it. His advice to Philip of Burgundy was to reach agreement with the English King quickly. If he waited until Easter it would probably be too late.[10]

Philip was not prepared to be hurried. He was a man of deliberate ways who did not make up his mind on impulse and believed in taking advice. He was also very much in need of it. His own experience of French politics was limited and few of his councillors had much more. His main source of advice about the internal tensions of Paris appears to have been the volatile Carmelite friar Eustache de Pavilly, then living at Bruges, whom he

summoned to his court to assist him. At the end of September Philip travelled to Lille to meet the council of Flanders. The most important decision made at Lille was to pursue a permanent peace and a military alliance with the English. The Parisians were known to be in favour of it and Philip himself was 'inclined' to agree. It was the only feasible way of pursuing the murderers of his father. He proposed to send his own embassy to Normandy to open direct negotiations with Henry V. In the meantime his councillors were concerned to sustain John the Fearless's alliance with Paris and the northern towns which was the main foundation of Burgundian power. It was proposed to recruit 800 men-at-arms and 1,000 crossbowmen to secure the towns against Armagnac attack. All of them were invited to send their representatives to what amounted to an Estates-General of the Burgundian sector of France which was to open at Arras on 18 October. It was hoped to obtain their public declarations of their support and perhaps even a grant of money.[11]

The Duke of Burgundy's embassy to the English was led by the aged Bishop of Arras, Martin Porrée, whom a contemporary described as the most 'adamant' Burgundian on the royal council. He was an experienced negotiator who had led two embassies to England in his time and had fought John the Fearless's corner with consummate skill at the Council of Constance. He was supported by Guillaume de Champdivers, who had been John's main contact with Henry V for the past two years, and by the Fleming Ghillebert de Lannoy, at thirty-three already a seasoned soldier and traveller whose adventures included landing with a raiding party in the west of England in 1404 and two spells in England as a prisoner of war. Henry V's commissioners, presided over by the Earl of Warwick, received them at Mantes on 26 October 1419. It was an embarrassing fiasco. Unfortunately, the Burgundian ambassadors' instructions had been drawn up at a time when Philip of Burgundy was still unaware of the English King's discussions with the Parisians. Porrée and his companions were authorised to offer Henry the territorial settlement that he had demanded in the summer, which Henry V had already rejected as a basis for negotiation. In addition their instructions assumed that they would be supported by an embassy from the Queen, who alone had the constitutional power to commit the Crown to any treaty. But Isabelle had taken fright at the English demands, which appeared to leave no place for her in the future government of France. She had declined to be represented at Mantes. Not only that but she turned down Philip of Burgundy's request to be appointed as Charles VI's lieutenant in France, the position previously held by his father, as a result of which the Duke had no authority to negotiate anything

binding on the French state.[12]

The English commissioners reminded them that the truce was due to expire on 11 November. The King, they said, would accept nothing less than a treaty along the lines of the proposals that he had made to the Parisians at Gisors. Unless by then they had agreed to negotiate on that basis he would break off the talks. In fact he would regard himself as free of any obligations to them even before that date if Paris opened its gates to him. On the following day Henry received the Burgundian ambassadors himself at a tempestuous audience. Speaking through Bishop Kemp, he repeated his previous demands. The Bishop of Arras protested that these were 'great and weighty matters, as high as any could be'. He and his colleagues had no power to deal with them. They would have to send for further instructions. Henry at this point spoke himself. He acknowledged that they would need further instructions, but the question was simple enough. Were they prepared to negotiate on the basis of his proposals, yes or no? It should not take them long to answer it. The details could be agreed later. If the Duke of Burgundy was thinking of claiming the throne himself, he added, he would fight him 'to the death'. If he, Henry, were ever to concede his own claim he would rather do it in favour of the Duke of Orléans. As for the truce, Henry was willing to expand its scope to cover an area six leagues (fifteen miles) around Paris, but he would not extend it for a single day beyond 11 November. They must have an answer for him by then. As the ambassadors left, the ring around Paris was tightened. The Duke of Gloucester crossed the Seine over the Meulan bridge at the end of October 1419 with a large part of the English army and advanced up the left bank. Poissy, the last bridge-town before Saint-Cloud, opened its gates after a siege of a week. The French King's fortified manor at Saint-Germain-en-Laye surrendered after three days when the English took one of the towers by assault. In the second week of November the English columns halted exactly six leagues from the capital.[13]

The news of these operations reached Philip of Burgundy along with Saint-Pol's gloomy report from Paris at about the same time as Martin Porrée's account of the failure of his mission. The Duke was at Arras, where the Estates of the Burgundian-controlled provinces of France was drawing to a close. He was confronted with the most fateful decision of his long reign. Should he submit to Henry V's ultimatum and accept the principle of a change of dynasty? He called an urgent meeting of his council. Their numbers were swollen by churchmen, retainers, allies and friends who were in the city for the assembly. A remarkable memorandum was prepared for them by Philip's officials, summarising the arguments for and against an

alliance on Henry's terms. Its starting point was that the English King was now in a position of overwhelming military strength. He had declared his intention of taking the French crown either with the consent and goodwill of the French or by force. France had no significant forces with which to oppose him. Paris was in danger of falling to him when he resumed his advance in less than a fortnight's time. A decision could no longer be put off.

The arguments against accepting Henry's terms were both legal and political. The treaty that Henry was demanding would be treasonable and legally ineffective without the personal consent of Charles VI, which he was in no position to give. Even if the King had been of sound mind it was doubtful whether he could authorise a decision of such enormous import as a change of dynasty. He would need the approval of the twelve peers of France and the Estates-General. Politically agreement with the English was dangerous. It would expose Philip personally to assassination and his lands to attack by the Dauphinists. Under an English monarchy there would be little room for a strong Burgundian presence at the heart of affairs and Philip's ability to extract resources from the French Crown would be much reduced. The treaty would encounter strong opposition not just from the Dauphinists but from the Queen, the royal council at Troyes and the Duke of Brittany. Their views could not be ignored. They might respond by delivering up the King to the Dauphin, which would greatly increase his following and leave Philip isolated.

As against these considerations, the arguments in favour were familiar from the debates within the Burgundian camp at Pontoise in June. The current situation was impossible and Philip had to choose between the lesser and the greater evil. An English military conquest would cause untold damage to the state and its subjects. It would be a far worse outcome for Charles VI than a treaty which left him on the throne for the rest of his life. By comparison a peaceful transfer of the succession to the English King would have some significant advantages. In the first place the dual monarchy that Henry had proposed was an attractive prospect. If Henry was prepared, as he seemed to be, to rule France as King of the French and not as the master of a conquered and subordinate realm he would be in a position to unify the country, something which neither the Duke of Burgundy nor the Dauphin was strong enough to do. Secondly, there was the important point which the Count of Saint-Pol had made. Unless Philip accepted Henry's terms the English King would resume his advance and the walled towns of northern France would probably open their gates to him. There was nothing to encourage them to hold out. They were weary of war

and fed up with the Burgundian alliance which had brought them nothing but fresh violence. They would happily live under 'whatever ruler would govern them in peace'. This would be the end of the Burgundian party in France. Third, the alternatives were bleak. Henry might ally with the Dauphin instead. And even if he did not, unless the crown was transferred to the English King it would be inherited by the Dauphin. Once on the throne he could be expected to mobilise the whole resources of France against the house of Burgundy. Or, if the Dauphin were excluded on account of his crime, the crown might pass to Charles of Orléans which would be worse. The officials thought that the Queen could be won over. Proper financial provision would no doubt be made for her in the terms of the treaty whereas she would be left with nothing if Henry seized the throne by force. On the face of it these were powerful arguments. But they assumed that if Charles VI's personal interests were protected the treaty would ultimately be accepted by the whole of France. They discounted the likely resistance from the Dauphinist provinces of the centre and south. They also over-estimated the resources of the English and their ability to sustain a long war. But, as the authors pointed out, every option was unattractive. Philip would have to choose the lesser evil.[14]

We know nothing of the debate in council except for its outcome. The Duke of Burgundy decided to accept Henry V's terms. A brief truce was patched up with the English covering the Paris area in order to allow the terms to be finalised. Meanwhile an English embassy under the Earl of Warwick and Bishop Kemp left Mantes to get the Duke's commitment recorded in writing. On 30 November Warwick and his colleagues arrived at Arras. The English diplomats brought with them a draft treaty setting out Henry's terms. These were very familiar by now and were perfunctorily agreed. On 2 December the Duke of Burgundy sealed letters patent in which the English terms were set out verbatim and declared them to be 'sensible, reasonable and constructive'. Philip undertook to do all that he could to get them approved by the King and Queen and the council at Troyes.

There was very little haggling. The Burgundian side was in such a hurry to concede Henry's demands that they agreed to postpone their own demands until they could be considered by Henry himself. Most of these were claims to a share of the spoils. Philip and his council wanted a promise that Henry would cede to him the whole of northern Picardy and the Vermandois from the Somme to the borders of Artois and Flanders including Abbeville and the port of Le Crotoy. They wanted Henry to confirm the Duke of Burgundy's rights over the three castleries of Walloon Flanders, which had

never been unconditionally conceded by the Valois kings. They wanted Henry's assurance that the large annual subsidy from the French treasury for the defence of the castle of Sluys would continue to be paid. They wanted a durable truce to protect Paris and the northern towns before their loyalty to the Burgundian cause finally drained away. And they wanted a firm military alliance against the Dauphin.

In the event only some of these demands were conceded. Henry was prepared to concede a truce protecting Paris and all other places not under Dauphinist control until 1 March 1420. He also promised that Philip would have a share of the spoils of France: further territory worth a minimum of 20,000 *livres* of Paris a year, which was probably intended to comprise at least part of the territory in Picardy which Philip coveted. On these terms the deal was done. Henry V celebrated Christmas 1419 at Rouen. A large Burgundian embassy mingled with the English captains, courtiers and ministers in the citadel during the festivities. The truce was sealed on Christmas Eve and a military alliance on Christmas Day. The final treaty would be sealed in the presence of the two kings and the Duke of Burgundy at Troyes. Three days after Christmas, on 28 December, the Duke of Burgundy summoned all the chivalry of his northern domains to meet him at Cateau-Cambrésis south of Cambrai for the march on Troyes.[15]

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Although the murder at Montereau had been carefully planned over a period of about three weeks the Dauphin's councillors had given little thought to what they would do if their plot succeeded. They seem to have thought that the Burgundian cause would simply collapse once John the Fearless was out of the way, leaving the field open for the Dauphin to resume his rightful place in his father's government. They had not anticipated the outrage that the murder would provoke or the rapprochement between the house of Burgundy and the English which would inevitably follow. So there was no attempt to take advantage of the confusion which followed the news; no plan to march on Troyes or Paris; and no prepared barrage of propaganda. It was not until the night after the murder that the small group of men around the Dauphin woke up to the enormity of what had happened. The three secretaries who were with him began to draft their explanation for distribution across France. Unlike John the Fearless after the murder of the Duke of Orléans the Dauphin decided to deny all responsibility. There had been, he said, a most unfortunate altercation with the Duke on the bridge in the course of which the Duke was seen to reach for the

hilt of his sword and was cut down by the Dauphin's nervous attendants. Nothing had really changed. Indeed the Dauphin professed to see no reason why the peace of Pouilly should not still be put into effect. Four days later a different version was authorised. According to the new account the Duke had planned to abduct the Dauphin from the bridge. Archambaud de Foix was said to have advanced upon him sword in hand to carry out this plan and in the ensuing fracas the Duke was killed. This account conveniently surfaced only after Archambaud had died of his wounds and was no longer able to contradict it. It was distributed to the northern towns by Jean de Harcourt Count of Aumale, who was nominated as the Dauphin's special representative to appease the mounting outrage. Meanwhile the Dauphin's entourage thrashed around in search of a better defence. The castle at Montereau was searched for incriminating documents, but none was found. John the Fearless's secretary Jean Seguinat, who had been with him on the bridge, was imprisoned for three months at Montereau and then at Melun and Bourges in order to make him sign a confession admitting all the Dauphinists' worst suspicions: that his master had secretly allied with the English at Calais in October 1416 and again at Pontoise in July 1419; that he had personally organised the massacres in Paris; and that he had come to Montereau intending to kill the Dauphin. They interrogated him day after day. They threatened him with torture, holding up the instruments before his eyes. They claimed to have found a letter from him ordering the destruction of a copy of a treaty with the English King in the Hôtel de Bourgogne in Paris. Seguinat denied any knowledge of such things and was eventually ransomed and released.[16]

Across France opinion was polarised. The competing denunciations of both sides served mainly to entrench existing loyalties, which were largely dictated by interest and geography. A steady trickle of defectors from the civil service abandoned their posts in the Burgundian north to join the Dauphin. There was some traffic, but less, in the opposite direction. The Dauphin's circulars cut little ice in the north and the Duchess of Burgundy's angry letters made few converts in the centre and south. The Dauphin tried to extend an olive branch to the house of Burgundy, but his efforts in this direction were clumsy and unsuccessful. He wrote a letter of condolence to Philip of Burgundy urging him to resist the blandishments of those who were pouring bile into his ear and asking him to receive the Count of Aumale who would give him the true story. He sent messages to the dowager duchess asking her to soften her son's heart. But since Aumale's instructions consisted mainly of a long and angry denunciation of the dead man's crimes

he got nowhere. In the course of October, as news of Philip's negotiations with the English trickled through to the Dauphin's court, his councillors grew desperate. The Burgundian Regnier Pot, then the custodian of the fortress of Parthenay in Poitou, was lobbied as he passed through Loches on his way to rejoin the court of Burgundy. Pot at this stage still hoped that the Dauphin could be reconciled with the new Duke of Burgundy and was happy to serve as the go-between. But he does not seem to have been party to the discussions at Arras, and if he ever delivered his message it fell upon deaf ears. There is even some evidence that the Dauphin sent ambassadors to Henry V with a competing offer, including an alliance against Philip of Burgundy and a partition of his domains between them. But these proposals were much less attractive than the deal that Henry proposed to make with the Duke of Burgundy. If the English King paid any attention to them it was only in order to sharpen Philip's sense of urgency.[17]

The one person whom the Dauphin did not approach was his mother Isabelle of Bavaria. Relations between mother and son had been frigid since the Queen's alliance with John the Fearless in November 1417. Yet she was his only hope of halting the Burgundians' headlong rush into the arms of the English. Isabelle had been a supporter of an English alliance when it had simply been a question of military cooperation and the partition of territory. But she had the strongest misgivings about the English King's demand for the succession to the French crown and refused to take part in his negotiations with the Duke of Burgundy. As the custodian of the King's inert person she was in a strong position to hold up progress towards a treaty. Her stand was supported by important elements in Paris, men who, like the Queen, had encouraged negotiations with the English without appreciating where they would lead. The Duke of Burgundy's letters patent of 2 December accepting the English terms arrived in the capital about a fortnight after they had been sealed. They were read out in the Parlement chamber in the presence of the King's councillors in the city and a crowd of prominent Parisians. They approved them by acclamation. But in the streets outside, there was much discontent. There were complaints that the King and Queen could not have approved such a thing, and demands for a fresh look at the possibility of a grand alliance of all the parties against the English. This idea was hardly realistic in the aftermath of the brutal murder of one of the two party leaders. But the Queen, seeing a way out of her dilemma, took it up with enthusiasm. Isabelle wrote to her son at Bourges urging him to fresh efforts to heal the divisions of France. She held out the possibility of her leaving Troyes and joining the Dauphin's court.

She apparently proposed to bring her daughter Catherine with her, thus stopping all further discussion of her marriage to the English King. There was much euphoria at Bourges when this letter arrived shortly before Christmas. The negotiations with Isabelle were entrusted to the Dauphin's Chancellor Robert Le Maçon and his financial councillor Raymond Raguier, both of whom were former officers of the Queen's household. They persuaded themselves that a settlement of the decadelong civil war was within their grasp and sent an enthusiastic response back to Troyes. Meanwhile the Dauphin wrote to the Parisians urging them to hold out against the advocates of the treaty. The Bishop of Paris, Gérard de Montaigu, who had fled the city during the massacres, joined in with his own pleas, urging 'good Frenchmen' of Paris to rally to the Regent.[18]

All of this excitement proved to be premature, for the Queen's opposition to the change of dynasty was swiftly snuffed out. Isabelle was powerless at Troyes. The place was full of the Duke of Burgundy's troops. The King, the Queen and the Princess Catherine were escorted everywhere by the Duke's officers, and a close watch was kept on them in case they tried to leave. The dowager Duchess of Burgundy made sure of the support of the King's councillors in the city. She sent gifts of wine to the Burgundians who sat on it to encourage them to be 'diligent in the Duke's interest'. One of her own most senior councillors arrived from Dijon to reinforce their numbers and keep an eye on the royal family. Early in January 1420 they were joined by Henry V's personal representative, Louis Robesart. Robesart came from a Hainaut family naturalised in England since the reign of Edward III. He was a close friend of Henry V and had done well out of the conquest of Normandy. He was also a discreet and persuasive diplomat speaking perfect French with good connections in France and an ample budget. Isabelle of Bavaria's own feelings over the following weeks have left no record. But she was under heavy pressure and had few choices. The royal court was in a pathetic state, the King's household meanly kept and his revenues drying up. Her own domain revenues had been severely depleted by the civil war and the English conquest of Normandy. Her allowance from the royal treasury had been reduced by more than half. Her cooperation was easily bought. The Duchess's officers promised to pay off the arrears of her allowance, nominally by way of a loan from the duchy's revenues. It is probable that Robesart promised her a substantial increase once Henry had assumed power as Regent. By 17 January 1420 Isabelle had abandoned her opposition to the English terms. A prolix ordinance was issued from Troyes which was ordered to be read out on market days across France 'weekly'. In it, the Dauphin was

denounced as a murderer, traitor, perjuror and 'enemy of the common weal, God and justice'. His crimes were declared to have closed off every road to peace. The ordinance did not declare him to be a bastard, as is sometimes suggested. But it repudiated him politically. The prince was declared ineligible to succeed to the throne or to hold any fief or office in France. Philip of Burgundy's agreement with Henry V was declared (untruthfully) to have been made with Charles VI's authority and was formally ratified in his name. This thunderous reaffirmation of Burgundian control over the fortunes of the monarchy put an end to objections to the change of dynasty in Paris.[19]

Spring came early in 1420. Violets were in flower in January and roses by Easter. The unseasonal warmth brought an end to the city's firewood crisis of the autumn. But bread was still unaffordable. Spices, figs, raisins and almonds had vanished from the markets. And there was no fresh meat to be had. The truce with the English had opened up the river route into Normandy and to some extent alleviated the supply situation. But in every other direction the city's supplies were interrupted by the ring of Dauphinist garrisons around it. At Compiègne the old Armagnac partisan Guillaume de Gamaches now maintained a small army of several hundred mounted men. In November they had surprised the important Burgundian town of Roye on the main road from Paris to Arras. Another large body of Dauphinist partisans operated from Guise under the command of two showy young Gascon adventurers, Jean 'Poton' de Saintrailles and Étienne de Vignolles (known as 'La Hire'), brothers in arms who had come north in the following of Bernard of Armagnac and were beginning to make names for themselves. In October 1419 they began to spread their network of garrisons east into Champagne. They seized the walled town of Crépy-en-Laonnais by escalade at night and established a satellite garrison several hundred strong which spread terror and destruction across much of the Laonnais and the Vermandois. By December they had penetrated beyond Reims, establishing another base at Vitry-en-Perthois. The operations of these garrisons were the Dauphin's only means of fighting back against the approaching disaster of an Anglo-Burgundian alliance, and yet in Paris they served only to firm up support for the alliance in the streets.[20]

In a sense these were pinpricks. But they had a considerable political impact, especially in Paris. John of Luxembourg, the Burgundian commander in the sector, struggled to contain them with the support of the Duke's new English allies. On 18 January 1420 Roye surrendered to him after a siege of a month by an army of several thousand men which had included all the Duke's most

famous captains and an artillery train. The Dauphinist garrison withdrew south towards Compiègne under the protection of John of Luxembourg's safe-conducts, but they were wiped out with the connivance of their escorts by an English force of 2,000 men who had come up from Normandy. From Roye the English marched east and joined forces with some 400 men-at-arms of the garrison of Paris to begin the Sisyphean task of clearing the Dauphinist garrisons between the capital and Champagne. The old keep of Louis of Orléans at Tremblay and the nearby fortress of Dammartin, the closest Dauphinist strongholds to Paris, were besieged. Their garrisons withdrew under cover of night, setting fire as they left to the vast grange of the abbey of Saint-Denis which contained much of the district's grain harvest. At Crépy-en-Laonnais Philip of Burgundy conducted the siege in person with the support of a small English contingent commanded by the Earl of Warwick. The place finally surrendered on about 11 March after a large section of its wall had been brought down by mines. The surrender terms were harsh reminders of the divisions of France. The Dauphin's professional companies, Italian, Spanish and Gascon, and those who came from the provinces under his control were treated as prisoners of war and allowed to bargain for their lives. They marched out of the place led by La Hire himself, sporting a jaunty scarlet cape over his armour and accompanied by liveried outriders. But by Philip's lights their companions from the northern provinces should have been with him. They were handed over to his provost-marshal and left hanging from trees as the army passed on its way.[21]

The peace treaty had been expected to receive its final approvals at Troyes in February 1420. However, the army recruited to accompany the Duke of Burgundy had had to be diverted to operations against the Dauphinist garrisons around Paris. Nearly two months were lost. Henry V and his councillors in France, perennially worried that their moment might be passing, kept up the pressure. They renewed the truce grudgingly and for short periods. At the end of February 1420 there was a sudden crisis as the English declined to renew it again unless Beaumont-sur-Oise was surrendered to them. Beaumont was the only crossing of the Oise in Burgundian hands. Possession of it would enable the English to control access to Paris by the north as well as by the west. The King's demand was only conceded after a long and agonised debate among the Parisian leaders in the chamber of the Parlement. Even then the Burgundian captain of the place refused to let the English in without a written order signed by the King, the Queen and the Duke of Burgundy. The incident left an unpleasant taste among Parisians of every class. The truth was that the English were in a

position to insist. Paris already depended on them to let supplies past Pontoise and Meulan and they had the only army capable of clearing the Dauphinist garrisons around the city.[22]

The two zones of France were already growing apart geographically, legally, psychologically. In December 1419 the Dauphin's councillor Hémon Raguier had taken advantage of an official bag going to the court of Troyes to slip in a letter to his sister with family news and a plea to look after his interests and remember him to friends 'over there'. But over the following weeks an iron curtain descended between Burgundian and Dauphinist France, separating not just provinces but families, friends and colleagues. Movement between the two sectors was strictly forbidden and increasingly dangerous. In Paris householders were required to report arrivals from the 'rebel' provinces. They were liable to be summarily thrown in prison. In the Dauphin's territories residents found to have visited Paris were held as prisoners of war. Travellers were stopped on the roads and at city gates. Letters were intercepted and the messengers punished. Priests, who could sometimes count on a measure of immunity, carried messages in their heads, often accompanied by some token that would be recognised by the recipient. Parents and children, spouses and siblings, sweethearts and lovers, business colleagues from different obediences met surreptitiously and then petitioned for pardons. Legacies from parents and friends in one sector were confiscated by the authorities in the other. It had been possible to hope in earlier crises of the civil war that the storm would pass. But for many Parisians scattered through the French provinces, Burgundians who had fled before the June days of 1418 or Armagnacs who had fled afterwards, and for others who had simply been in the wrong place at the wrong time, it was becoming horribly clear that their exile was permanent. Their losses would never be repaired. 'It is no excuse for those have come from the enemy's obedience to protest that they are good people who were living there against their will,' declared the King's proctors in the Parlement of Paris. Surprisingly quickly ancient patterns of trade adapted themselves to the breach between the regions of France. Stringent controls were put in place by both sides on trade with enemy areas, enforced by confiscation, imprisonment and the pillory. Some seaborne trade continued through La Rochelle, the Kingdom of Bourges's only outlet to the Atlantic. But along the Loire and the southern march of Burgundy overland trade routes were cut as the commerce of central and southern France was reoriented away from the industries and consumers of Paris, Normandy, Champagne and Flanders towards the entrepôts of the Rhône valley and the Mediterranean.[23]

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Writing to Regnier Pot in December 1419 at a time when there were still hopes of a reconciliation with the Queen and the Duke of Burgundy, the Dauphin's chancellor Robert le Maçon declared that his master would to 'do such things in the coming season as should be spoken of for ever'. This was an oblique reference to his plans to deploy a Scottish contract army in France. His councillors intended to launch a major offensive against the southern flank of the English positions in Normandy while Henry V was distracted in Paris and the Île de France. An army of about 2,000 men-at-arms and 500 bowmen was to be recruited in the Loire provinces and in Brittany. By the end of October 1419 most of these men had reached Le Mans where the Marshal Pierre de Rieux, the designated commander, had established his headquarters. The plan was that the Scots should disembark in Brittany, presumably at Saint-Malo, and join forces with them there. To boost recruitment the Dauphin declared his intention of taking command of the combined army in person.[24]

The Castilian fleet had sailed for Scotland from Santander at about the end of August 1419 and joined a flotilla of French ships off Belle-Île. To avoid having to run the gauntlet of the Channel, now occupied by the English on both sides, the Castilians passed west of the Lizard and sailed up the Irish Sea. The English mobilised ships in the West Country to intercept them. But the Castilians successfully evaded them and reached the Clyde unscathed at about the beginning of October. There a number of Scottish merchantmen were waiting to join them. According to the fragmentary French records some 6,000 Scots embarked on these ships. If the Scottish companies observed the usual proportions, 1,500 of these would have been men-at-arms and the rest archers and armed servants. Given the limited carrying capacity of the fleet it is probable that only the men-at-arms brought horses. The archers and hangers-on must have been expecting to find mounts in France or to do without them.

For reasons said to be 'beyond his control' the Earl of Mar did not accompany the army. Instead it was jointly commanded by John Stewart, Earl of Buchan and Chamberlain of Scotland, and Archibald Douglas, Earl of Wigton. Buchan was the younger of Albany's two sons, who had passed most of his career as the instrument of his father's ill-fated plans to make his family the dominant power in northern Scotland. Wigton was Douglas's eldest son and Albany's son-in-law, who had been given an earldom to lend him comparable status. According to the leading Scottish chronicler of the period Buchan was 'mature, industrious, shrewd,

careful, graceful, handsome, well-mannered and eloquent'. He was destined to mature into the most famous Scottish captain of the age. But neither man had been chosen for his political or military talents. They had been chosen for their ability to call on the pervasive networks of kinsmen, tenants and allies of the Stewarts and the Black Douglases. It was a microcosm of Scottish military society that sailed from the Clyde in October 1419.[25]

They had a long and dangerous voyage ahead of them. The Duke of Brittany had recently withdrawn his cooperation in the aftermath of the murder of John the Fearless and closed his ports to the Castilian fleet. As a result the ships were forced to take the long passage round the Ushant rocks of western Brittany and land much further south at La Rochelle. The English authorities in Bordeaux did their best to intercept them on the return voyage. They mobilised a flotilla of armed ships to intercept the Castilian vessels, which was probably drawn mainly from the annual wine fleet from England. But it sailed too late from the Gironde. Towards the end of October the Castilian ships slipped into La Rochelle and safely disembarked the Scots. The English flotilla arrived off the port a few days later. Having missed their moment they resolved to blockade the Castilians in the harbour. The episode ended in humiliation. After two months, on 30 December 1419 they took on a large number of French soldiers commanded by the Bastard of Alençon and emerged from the harbour to confront the blockading force. In the ensuing battle in the gulf the English flotilla was dispersed and many of its ships captured or sunk. Some 700 of their crews lost their lives.[26]

The Dauphin received the Scottish captains at Bourges in December 1419 with much official largesse and synthetic joy. Yet it is plain that in spite of the extraordinary logistical feat which had brought them to France he was disappointed. The reasons are far from clear. He had evidently expected larger numbers. He may also have expected an all-mounted force comparable to the field armies of Henry V. But most of all he was disappointed in the leadership. None of the heads of the great families of Scotland was there. Neither of the two designated commanders enjoyed the military reputation of the Earl of Mar. The Dauphin's courtiers dismissed the new arrivals as 'wine-bags' and 'mutton-eaters', and his councillors were curiously reluctant to deploy them to the front. The ambitious plans of the autumn for a joint offensive against Lower Normandy were shelved. Instead, the Dauphin left for Languedoc, taking some of the newly arrived Scottish companies with him. The rest were directed to winter quarters in the Loire valley. Buchan and Wigton were told to return to Scotland once the winter gales had cleared,

accompanied by Regnault de Chartres, the Dauphin's most experienced diplomat. They were to press Albany and Douglas for more and better men and to urge the Earl of Mar to cross the sea at once and take command of them. As a result of these decisions the only Scottish troops to be deployed in the field over the next few months were the advance guard of William Douglas of Drumlanrig, which had been in France since the previous March. They were sent to join the Marshal de Rieux on the march of Maine. The Dauphin's failure to use the powerful Scottish army as a single striking force was a missed opportunity of astonishing proportions.[27]

Writing from the papal court in Florence, where Henry V's ambassadors were bandying words with the Dauphin's representatives before the Pope, Cardinal Fillastre reported that he detected an unaccustomed anxiety behind their usual bravado. According to his informants the English were privately worried that the King was running out of money and manpower. Most of all, they were 'frightened of the Scots'. Henry V, like many war leaders, was more acutely conscious of his own difficulties than those of his enemies. He knew nothing of the Dauphin's disappointments and very little about the wasteful way in which Buchan's army was being deployed. But he was indeed frightened of the Scots. Their intervention came at a difficult moment. The English King's revenues over the summer had been the lowest of the reign. Militarily the appearance of the Scots in the field in France would erode his advantage in numbers and his technical superiority in archery. Worse, it threatened to undermine his diplomatic position in the aftermath of the murder of John the Fearless. The danger was that the momentum of the campaign in Normandy, which had been successfully maintained for longer than any previous English campaign in France, would falter at the very moment when the King seemed to be within sight of achieving all his objectives.[28]

Addressing the opening session of Parliament in the Painted Chamber of the Palace of Westminster on 16 October 1419, Chancellor Langley was discreet about the larger prospects opened up by the murder of John the Fearless. He recounted the triumphs of the King in Normandy and his frustrated attempts to achieve a negotiated peace at Meulan and Pontoise. There had been no Parliamentary subsidy since the end of 1417. Langley warned the assembly that all that the King had achieved would be lost without fresh financial support and reinforcements on a large scale. But resentment of the war was growing among the classes represented in Parliament. The Commons were weary of constant taxation. The continual flow of coin and bullion across the Channel to pay war wages was causing severe deflation. With Normandy conquered,

France prostrate and her maritime strength all but eliminated, the English were beginning to ask themselves what further advantages the war could bring to England as opposed to Henry V personally. They were dismayed by the prospect of having to finance from English tax revenues the extension of Henry's conquests to the rest of France. After some difficult bargaining the Commons were persuaded to grant one and a third standard lay subsidies. The grant, amounting to about £65,000 including the traditional matching grant from the clergy, was almost certainly less than Langley and Keeper Bedford had demanded. And the Commons stipulated that it was only to be used for the defence of England. If the King needed money in France let him buy wool in England and sell it in Normandy. 'Nothing in this present act', they declared, 'shall bind the English realm … to support the wars of our sovereign lord the King or his heirs or successors in France or Normandy.'

So great was Henry's shortage of cash at this time that it led him to one of the most ruthless acts of his reign. Shortly before Parliament met he had his stepmother Joan of Navarre arrested at her manor at Havering in Essex and accused, along with three members of her household, of using witchcraft to bring about the King's death. This contrived accusation, which Henry would remember on his deathbed as a 'charge unto oure conscience', was never pressed and was eventually dropped. But not before Henry had obtained Parliamentary authority to seize her dower lands worth nearly £4,000 a year and pay the proceeds into his treasury.[29]

When the news of the Scots' arrival at La Rochelle reached Henry V he decided upon a significant increase in the scale of English operations in France. Humphrey Duke of Gloucester was sent back to England to replace the Duke of Bedford as Keeper of the Realm, and Bedford was summoned to France in his place. He was commissioned to recruit 5,000 fresh troops in England to reinforce the 10,000 already in France. This proved to be impossible. Bedford was unable to raise more than 1,200 together with a small corps of miners. But he proposed to bring with him another weapon against the Scots, their captive King James Stewart. James was on bad terms with the Duke of Albany who ruled Scotland in his name but had more or less abandoned him to his fate. He was also totally dependent on his English jailers, who funded the costs of his small household in England, and on the Duke of Burgundy, who allowed his port officials at Bruges to collect a tax on James's behalf on Scottish merchants trading to Flanders. Desperate to regain his liberty after passing the whole of his reign as a prisoner in England, James entered into a personal alliance with Henry V. The English

King equipped him with money, armour, banners and horses. James for his part agreed to fight with the English army in France. He was expected to forbid his subjects to serve the Dauphin and perhaps even to bring them over to the English side.[30]

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On 21 December 1419 the Dauphin left Bourges for Languedoc, accompanied by a cohort of prelates and noblemen, a mounted army and a personal escort of 600 liveried men-at-arms with his colours flying from their lances.[31] Languedoc was now the only major province south of the Loire which remained outside his direct control. The Count of Foix, who had acted for the last eight months as the Lieutenant of both sides, had retained the whole military and financial resources of Languedoc in his own hands and given no support to either party. At the outset this policy had been welcome to the Estates of the province. But the murder of John the Fearless and the prospect of an Anglo-Burgundian alliance made it impossible to sustain the policy of neutrality any longer. With four large Burgundian garrisons still based in the Rhône valley and the English increasingly active on the Gascon march, the danger of their joining forces and turning the region into a base for operations in the Dauphin's rear was too serious for either the Dauphin or the Estates to ignore.

In October 1419 the Dauphin had sent two astute politicians with strong local connections into the province as his personal representatives: the Bishop of Carcassonne Géraud du Puy and Hughes lord of Arpajon. Armed with generous promises to respect the institutions and autonomy of the three seneschalsies, they had mounted a highly successful campaign to win over opinion in the leading towns. They completely outclassed the modest lawyer from Dijon and the monk from Pont-Saint-Esprit who were sent by the Duchess of Burgundy to represent her interests in the province. As a result, when in November the Estates of Languedoc met in the Dominican house at Béziers, sentiment was already running strongly in the Dauphin's favour. The leading towns of the region, Toulouse, Narbonne and Carcassonne, all declared for him. The rest eventually followed suit. On 1 March 1420, as the Dauphin's cavalcade crossed the Toulousain, a delegation of the Estates came before him at Gaillac on the Tarn. They acknowledged him as the 'true heir and regent of the kingdom' and offered him the submission of their province. On 4 March 1420 the Dauphin entered Toulouse in triumph.

The Count of Foix tried to bargain for his position. But the completeness of the province's submission left him nothing to

bargain with. He was not formally dismissed. But he was stripped of his functions and the government of Languedoc was put in the hands of a committee of the Dauphin's council under the presidency of Géraud du Puy. On 18 March 1420, when the Estates of Languedoc were reconvened in the Dauphin's presence at Carcassonne, Charles's victory was complete. The promises made to the men of Languedoc to buy their submission have not survived. But they can be inferred from the decisions of the assembly. The unpopular centralising policies of the Duke of Berry were finally repudiated. The Estates were formally restored and met at least annually thereafter. The abolition of the *aides* and the *taille* was confirmed. The Dauphin declared that he would be content with the revenues of the royal demesne, the *gabelle* and such further taxes as the Estates might be willing to grant him. A separate Parlement was established at Toulouse to serve as the final court of appeal for the three seneschalsies and the adjoining provinces south of the Dordogne with a jurisdiction parallel to that of the Parlement of Poitiers. It remained only to deal with the Burgundian garrisons of the Rhône valley. Nîmes and Pont-Saint-Esprit were recaptured by the Dauphin's troops with the support of locally recruited forces during April and May 1420. The two remaining Burgundian garrisons at Aigues-Mortes and Sommières held out for longer but neither of them was a serious threat. Aigues-Mortes eventually surrendered in January 1421 and Sommières a year later.[32]

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With the absorption of Languedoc the Dauphin controlled rather more than half of the territory of France plus the francophone province of Dauphiné beyond the Rhône which was technically a fief of the German Empire. But his resources still fell a long way short of what he needed. His private secretary Alain Chartier complained that he had no regular revenue, while his expenditure was a bottomless abyss. No medieval government was financially secure, but the finances of the Kingdom of Bourges were particularly precarious. They were based on three main sources of income: the demesne revenues of the Crown and the Dauphin's own appanage, taxation, and coinage manipulation. The first two were much diminished since the high point of the French public revenues in the 1380s. The Dauphin's enemies controlled the provinces from which the greater part of the demesne revenues of the Crown had traditionally been drawn. Politically he could not risk restoring the *aides* which had been the mainstay of French war finance for half a century. That left only the *gabelle* and irregular grants by local assemblies. There was a flood of such grants in the first surge of

loyalty which followed the June days in Paris in 1418. But thereafter the pattern was one of small grants grudgingly voted, haltingly collected and often reserved for local purposes. The Estates of Languedoc granted a *joyeux avènement* of 200,000 francs in March 1420 to mark the inauguration of the Dauphin's regency. The province was thereafter his most reliable source of tax revenues. Charles's total income from taxation and demesne revenues is impossible to estimate. But it must have been a modest proportion of the Crown's revenues from these sources before the civil war. Almost all of it was consumed by the new judiciary and civil service at Bourges and Poitiers and the grand household which was indispensable to a man who needed to present himself as a true ruler. There was little if any money left over for war.[33]

As a result in the early years of the Dauphin's regency military operations were funded mainly by manipulating the coinage. This was a politically dangerous choice. Repeated devaluation of the silver coinage was a disaster for those living on fixed incomes, especially the nobility and the Church, the holders of annuities and wage-earners in the towns. But devaluation made work for the mints, generating large profits from the margin (or *seigneuriage*) between the face value and the bullion value of the coins. Moreover the worst effects were probably felt not in the Dauphin's own territories but in the industrial towns of northern France controlled by his enemies. At the time of the ordinances of Niort in September 1418, the Dauphin controlled fourteen of the twenty-four royal mints and took most of the coinage profits of the kingdom. Over the following year four new mints were opened with plans for another four. In June 1419 the Dauphin began to adopt an aggressive coinage policy. Instead of following each successive devaluation ordained by the government in Paris, he embarked upon his own programme of competitive devaluation, regularly devaluing his coinage to pitch its fineness slightly below that of the mints under English or Burgundian control and endeavouring to outbid them for scarce silver bullion.

In October 1419 the Dauphin embarked upon an ambitious money-raising venture which was probably designed to pay the wages of the Scottish army then on its way to France. He farmed out all the mints under his control for a year to a syndicate of businessmen organised by a citizen of Poitiers called Marot de Betons. The idea was to devalue the silver coin issued by the Dauphin's mints by another 10 per cent, undercutting the northern mints, and at the same time to outbid them in the bullion market, thus taking most of the business. This was expected to yield a profit of six *livres* per mark of silver bullion, about a third of the bullion

price. Out of this Marot would be required to pay the costs of minting and deliver a fixed income of 180,000 *livres* a month to the Dauphin or 2,160,000 *livres* over the full year. This scheme, if it had worked, would have produced a sum more or less equivalent to the combined yield of the *aides* and the *taille* in their heyday in the 1380s. But by ill fortune the contract with Marot de Betons coincided with a sudden rise in the price of silver. As a result it was impossible to mint coins with the prescribed silver content and still make a profit. The contract proved to be worthless for the Dauphin and disastrous for Marot de Beton's backers. By May 1420 they had had enough and renounced it. The collapse of this scheme had a serious impact on the Dauphin's military plans.[34]

The biggest field army which the Dauphin can be shown to have raised in his own territories in the first two years of his regency was about 4,000 men and that was in the immediate aftermath of his flight from Paris. But his difficulties were not all down to finance. Recruitment was paralysed by a generalised war-weariness among the nobility of France, who progressively withdrew from active participation in the war leaving the fighting to be done by mercenaries and other professionals. The nobility answered the *ban* out of duty and for fear of being disparaged, wrote Alain Chartier, but they arrived late, served without enthusiasm and left as soon as they could. Criticism of the military nobility was a well-worn theme of the literature of late medieval France which reached fresh levels of intensity after the defeat at Agincourt. But Chartier's *Quadriloge Invectif*, a bitter lament on the state of France written in 1422, has a special place in this literature not just for the force of its language but for the fact that it was written by a man who lived and worked at the heart of the Dauphin's inner circle. His observations are broadly confirmed by the surviving records, which reveal a slump in recruitment among noblemen and knights, and by the experience of other countries including England, which would shortly encounter the same problem. The main reason was the general impoverishment of the aristocracy. Those who had fled from the north generally left most of their revenues and followers behind. War damage, downward pressure on rents and the steady devaluation of the money in which their rent-rolls were stated combined to hit the rest hard. Military service, which would once have been an adequate alternative to income from land, had become financially unattractive. Fighting in their own country, there was little booty to be had and lucrative prisoners were hard to come by in a period of persistent defeat. War wages were paid at rates about a third below the generous levels which had been normal before the civil war and they were frequently in arrears. The

higher ranks were often no better rewarded than their inferiors. As a result few men thought it worth becoming a knight or a banneret and noblemen formed an ever smaller proportion of the Dauphin's armies. Nowadays, said Chartier, anyone could call himself a captain of men-at-arms who knew how to wear a sword and a coat of mail even if he was without land or even a home to live in.[35]

Even men like these were hard to find. The division of France into an Anglo-Burgundian north and a Dauphinist centre and south disrupted the old structures of military recruitment. The disordered state of central and southern France discouraged men from fighting far from their homes. The moral impact of Henry V's victories took its toll on recruitment. To all this was added dismay at the divisions of France and doubts about the legitimacy of the Dauphin's cause after the murder at Montereau. Morale was low. Hope of victory ebbed away outside the small circle around the Dauphin for whom whistling in the dark was conventional and perhaps a condition of survival. A propaganda pamphlet completed by a loyal Dauphinist shortly after the murder of John the Fearless put words into the mouth of a personified France that must have evoked an echo among most of its readers. France's friends had fled before her enemies. Her subjects had abjectly surrendered or turned to fighting among themselves. Even in better times when she had had the flower of her chivalry at her disposal she had lost almost every great battle she had fought. How then was France to fight? With her own people? The enemy would destroy them. With foreign mercenaries? They would only loot and flee at the critical moment. It was against this pervasive gloom that Alain Chartier felt that he had to struggle. 'Our enemies are not made of iron nor immune from death or defeat,' he protested; 'they have no swords or armour which you lack, no numbers which you cannot match, no monopoly on the favours of Fortune.'[36]

The absence of high-ranking military leadership was both a symptom and a cause of this malaise. Professionals served for war wages and loot, but for the nobility the main attraction of field service was the honour to be won by fighting under the command of a great prince. The personality of Henry V and his brothers and their engagement with the war were by far the biggest recruiting agents for English armies, especially among the higher nobility. The Dauphin by comparison disliked campaigning and was not particularly good at it. Besides, as a childless prince and the last of the male line of the Valois, his capture or death would have been a catastrophe. He was probably wise to leave soldiering to others. The problem was that there were no others. He had no one around him with the reputation of the Duke of Exeter or John of Luxembourg to

draw volunteers to their banner. The office of Constable was left vacant for three years after the death of Bernard of Armagnac for want of a candidate with the stature to fill it. The Count of Foix was reported to have been offered it and declined. Philip of Orléans Count of Vertus, the ablest soldier among Louis of Orléans' legitimate progeny and the only one at liberty, died of disease in 1420 at the age of only twenty-four. The young Duke of Anjou left France in the same year to pursue the long-standing mirage of an Angevin kingdom in southern Italy. Charles de Bourbon, who had been with John the Fearless on the bridge at Montereau and switched sides after the murder, served as the Dauphin's captain-general in Languedoc after the Dauphin left the province. But the loyalties of this perennial opportunist were always suspect and he proved to be an unenthusiastic soldier.

The Dauphin's principal field commander in the early years was Pierre de Rieux lord of Rochefort, a competent soldier from a distinguished family of Breton professionals, who had succeeded his father as Marshal of France in 1417. But the French nobility were never likely to serve in force under men like him. 'My father would never have served under so and so's,' they would say, according to Chartier, 'so nothing will induce me to serve under him.' As a result the Dauphin turned increasingly to professional companies and organised corps of foreign mercenaries, Breton, Gascon and Italian, and then Scottish. Alain Chartier had nothing but contempt for these hirelings. But the truth is that they were more reliable and cheaper than native Frenchmen. According to Henry V's informants the Dauphin's Scottish and Castilian mercenaries were paid between twenty and twenty-four francs a month in devalued coin, less than a third of the going rate for a French man-at-arms. The dependence of the Kingdom of Bourges on professional companies living partly on the land goes a long way to explain the rather incoherent pattern of the military operations in the months which followed the murder of John the Fearless, a period when the Dauphin needed above all to show that he was a force to be reckoned with.[37]

The only large-scale operations in this period were on the vulnerable southern flank of Normandy. The march of Maine was a region of small lordships and countless castles, easily accessible from the Loire and from Brittany, which offered broad corridors into Lower Normandy by the coastal plain of Avranches in the west and the valley of the Orne in the east. Ever since the English invasion an active guerilla war had been conducted in this region by partisans of the young Duke of Alençon. Their leaders, the young Duke's uncle the Bastard of Alençon and a minor vassal of the duchy called Ambroise de Loré, occupied a number of castles on the

southern march of Alençon including the important fortress of Fresnay on the Sarthe, which they used as a base for persistent attacks on the English garrisons to the north. By 1419 the fighting had spread west towards the march of Brittany. Local Dauphinist forces captured the city of Avranches and the powerful border fortress of Pontorson. The great island-monastery of Mont-Saint-Michel, which dominated the coast at the eastern end of the Gulf of Saint-Malo, was refortified and received a Dauphinist garrison. These operations had forced the English King to send one of his best commanders, the Earl of Salisbury, to the region with large forces which he could not easily spare. Salisbury quickly recaptured Avranches, whose fixed defences were notoriously weak. But Pontorson remained in French hands until the following year and Mont-Saint-Michel remained a thorn in the English flank throughout their thirty-year occupation of Normandy.[38]

Plans for a major French offensive in this sector in the winter of 1419–20 were radically scaled down when the Earl of Mar failed to appear at the head of his Scottish cohorts. The sequel was an intense disappointment after the build-up of expectations which had preceded it. Jean d'Harcourt Count of Aumale and Pierre de Rieux were appointed to command in the Dauphin's place but with much diminished forces. They gathered about 2,000 men at Le Mans in February 1420, mostly professional soldiers from Brittany. In addition there were several hundred Scots of the company of Douglas of Drumlanrig in garrison at Fresnay. But the lumbering preparations had been too slow and too public. By the time Aumale and Rieux were ready Henry V, protected by his truce with the Burgundians around Paris, had been able to send powerful forces to the march of Maine. The Earl of Salisbury returned in January 1420 and laid siege to Fresnay. The Earl of Huntingdon and Sir John Cornwall, who had been fighting in the Île de France, crossed the breadth of Normandy to reinforce them. When, in the second week of March 1420, the Dauphinists advanced north up the valley of the Sarthe to relieve Fresnay the result was disaster. On 16 March, a short distance from the castle, Salisbury's troops were attacked by the Count of Aumale and Pierre de Rieux from the front and by Douglas and Ambroise de Loré with the garrison of Fresnay from the rear. He defeated them both. As the French and Scots fled back along the road towards Le Mans they were cut off near the city by Huntingdon and Cornwall and crushed between the two English armies. Many of them were killed trying to cram through the north gate of Le Mans or to escape across the fields. The Scots alone lost a hundred men-at-arms and a chest containing 12,000 *écus* for the men's wages. Douglas's pennon was carried off to be displayed in

Rouen cathedral. Pierre de Rieux and Ambroise de Loré were both captured.[39]

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It was probably the Dauphin's dire shortage of military manpower that led him early in 1420 into an ill-advised attempt to annexe Brittany to his cause, a clumsy blunder which revealed all the shortcomings of the impetuous and violent men around him. Brittany was, with Gascony and Béarn, the most intensely militarised region of France, a copious reserve of trained military manpower on which French governments had drawn for generations. But the Duke of Brittany was a fickle friend. He had successfully sheltered his duchy from the worst effects of both the civil war and the English invasion, by aligning himself with whichever side seemed to be the strongest, by befriending all parties and by deceiving them about his true intentions. The Duke had been an ally of John the Fearless since 1410 but he had done nothing to support his operations in France and had allowed his siblings to fight on both sides. He had brought his army to the Somme in 1415 but declined to advance against the English as they marched to Agincourt. He had had a treaty of neutrality with Henry V since 1414 and a truce on the marches since 1417 but turned a blind eye while the Dauphin recruited heavily among his subjects. For all that the Dauphin's circle regarded him with special venom. They resented his dealings with the English and his refusal to support the defence of France against the invader. They objected to the overt Burgundian bias which they detected in his successive attempts to broker a settlement of the civil war. They were furious at his refusal to allow the Castilian fleet to land the Scottish army in Brittany. Some of them, including Tanneguy du Châtel, had also fallen out with him personally.[40]

The Duke of Brittany's reaction to the murder at Montereau had been characteristic of the man. His first instinct was that with the passing of John the Fearless the Burgundian cause was done for. A month after the event he met the Dauphin at Loches and promised to back him with troops. But as soon as he returned to Brittany he thought better of it. News began to arrive of the bellicose response in Paris and Lille. An Anglo-Burgundian alliance began to look increasingly likely. The implications for the Dauphin's cause were grim. The Duke began to regret his impulsive reaction and the troops promised at Loches never appeared. Fresh appeals from Bourges were ignored. At the end of October 1419 John V renewed his alliance with Philip of Burgundy. At the same time he reopened diplomatic contacts with Henry V, which had been broken off since

the conferences at Meulan. Faced with the latest example of the Duke of Brittany's treachery the Dauphin's councillors responded by backing a *coup d'état* in Brittany.[41]

Olivier de Blois Count of Penthièvre was the heir to the ancient vendetta of the houses of Montfort and Blois which dated back to the Breton war of succession in the previous century. The family remained the most powerful barons of Brittany after the ducal house itself, with vast domains and powerful castles in the north of the peninsula and in the Vendée south of the Loire estuary. In spite of their defeat in the Breton civil war and successive reverses since, the ambitions of their line had not died. They had been kept alive by Olivier's formidable mother, Marguerite de Clisson, the dominant personality of the family who, although not a Penthièvre by birth, had conserved in her breast all the bitterness and venom of the past half-century of Breton history. In 1408 the old wars between the two houses briefly reignited before being settled by a fresh peace in 1410. Its terms were regarded as a humiliation for the Penthièvres. A decade later the collapse of the French state and the ambiguous position of the Duke of Brittany gave them another chance. Olivier de Blois sent his agents to the court of Bourges. The Dauphin was absent in Languedoc. They were received by four of his councillors: Jean Louvet, the equerry Pierre Frotier and the Maine nobleman Guillaume d'Avaugour, three of the inner group who had plotted the death of John the Fearless; and the seventeen-year-old John of Orléans, a bastard of Louis of Orléans. They agreed upon a plan to kidnap John V and imprison him as a traitor to France. According to a well-informed source the Duke was to be deposed and the duchy of Brittany transferred to the house of Penthièvre. The Dauphin's approval was obtained. A sealed warrant was drawn up by his council in his name and given to Olivier's emissaries.[42]

In early February 1420 the Duke of Brittany accepted an invitation to stay at Marguerite de Clisson's fortress of Champtoceaux, which stood on the left bank of the Loire just beyond the Breton border. On 13 February the Duke and his younger brother Richard were riding towards the castle in company with Olivier de Blois. Their route took them across a timber bridge over a ravine. The boards of the carriageway had been loosened in advance. As soon as the two guests were across Olivier's servants took up the boards and threw them into the stream below, leaving the Duke's escort, who had been following a short distance behind, stranded on the far side. Olivier's brother Charles emerged from a wood at the head of some forty mounted men and surrounded the Duke. According to John's own account the Count of Penthièvre seized him by the collar and told him that he was arresting him in

the name of the Regent. He would have his inheritance back, he said, before the Duke saw freedom again. There was a fierce sword-fight as the five or six companions whom the Duke had with him tried to free their master. But they were heavily outnumbered and swiftly overpowered. To throw off any pursuers a company of armed men took John, his brother and his marshal, tied up and bound to the saddles of their horses, from one Clisson castle in Bas-Poitou to another for a week before bringing them secretly back to Champtoceaux on 20 February. The Duke was shut in a locked and guarded room with its windows boarded up.

Marguerite de Clisson came to see him on the day of his arrival and again on the following day. She vented all the frustrated anger of the past three decades of humiliation against him. He and his father, she said, had deprived her sons of their inheritance. Nothing would satisfy them short of his abdication of the duchy in their favour. The Duke, who believed that he was about to be put to death, pleaded for his life. That, she replied, was not for her or her sons to decide. He was being held on the written orders of the Dauphin who would pronounce on his fate in due course. The Dauphin received the news of the Duke of Brittany's arrest in the middle of March at Carcassonne, where the Estates of Languedoc was about to open. He wrote at once to Olivier and his brothers. Denouncing the Duke of Brittany as an enemy of France and a covert ally of the English, he adopted their act as his own and ordered them to hold the prisoners securely until further order.[43]

The imprisonment of John V left a power vacuum in Brittany. Both of his sons were children. His brother Richard had been captured with him. The other brother Arthur Count of Richemont was a prisoner of war in England. The Penthièvres had expected the leaderless duchy to fall like ripe fruit into their hands. Instead they found the whole of Brittany united against them. The reins of power were seized by the 29-year-old Jeanne de France Duchess of Brittany, the oldest surviving child of Charles VI and Isabelle of Bavaria. She was a woman of little political experience but formidable energy and determination. When the news reached her at Vannes on 15 February 1420 she convened her husband's council. They met on the following day and ordered the confiscation of all the Penthièvre domains in Brittany. The whole of the military nobility of Brittany was summoned to arms. The Vicomte de Rohan was appointed as lieutenant-general to command them in the Duke's absence. A week later the Estates of Brittany met at Vannes. They pledged their loyalty to the Duchess and her children and ratified all that had been done.

Faced with this spontaneous outburst of anger, the retainers,

vassals and allies of the Penthièvres melted away. Within days an army of several thousand men had invaded the great appanage of the Penthièvres in northern Brittany. Most of their domains were rapidly overrun. The capital of the counts at Lambale held out for a few days before surrendering at the beginning of March. The remaining castles and walled towns surrendered in the course of March and April. At Champtoceaux Marguerite de Clisson and her sons first gave it out that John V had been drowned in the Loire, hoping that this would cause the ducal forces to disperse. Then they entered the Duke's cell accompanied by armed men and made him sign a letter addressed to his officers ordering them to call off the campaign. When these devices failed, as John told them they would, Olivier feared that the Breton army would march on Champtoceaux to release the Duke by force. So he left his mother and brothers in command of the fortress and spirited the prisoners away. They were taken under escort into the Vendée and from there into Dauphinist territory in Saintonge. They were moved from castle to castle every few days. As the news trickled through of the conquest of the Penthièvre domains the Duke was threatened with hideous tortures and death if more places were taken. By the beginning of April 1420 the two brothers were being held in secret in the citadel of Saint-Jean d'Angély. On the Loire a large Breton army with an artillery train arrived before Champtoceaux.[44]

Louvet and his colleagues at Bourges had seriously miscalculated. The predictable result of their schemes was to drive the Bretons into the arms of the English. The Bretons needed leadership and especially military leadership. The obvious candidate was Henry's prisoner, the 26-year-old Arthur Count of Richemont, by far the ablest soldier of his family and one of the few French captains whose name alone was enough to draw men to his banner. Richemont was then confined in the bleak castle of Fotheringhay in Northamptonshire. In March 1420 the Duchess sent an emissary to Henry V at Rouen asking to be allowed to ransom him. He was followed in early April by the Chancellor of Brittany, Jean de Malestroit Bishop of Nantes. Henry had every reason to encourage resistance in Brittany to the Dauphin's plans for the duchy. He agreed in principle to release Richemont without ransom, but only in return for political concessions. In England the Count was moved from Fotheringhay and brought to London. The Duchess was delighted. 'I have perfect confidence in you,' wrote this princess of the *fleur-de-lys* to her brother's principal enemy.[45]

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On 23 March 1420 Philip of Burgundy made his entry into Troyes.

Surrounded by all his father's most famous captains and a brilliant array of several thousand mounted men with banners flying, he rode past the crowds who had gathered by the gates of this strongly Burgundian city to cheer and shout 'Noël!' The Duke made straight for the old palace of the counts of Champagne where the King and Queen were waiting for him. He had brought with him an English embassy led by the Earl of Warwick and Sir Gilbert Umfraville. This was showy diplomacy, designed for public impact. The English ambassadors were escorted through the gates by 500 mounted English soldiers and a cavalcade of heralds, clerks, attendants, trumpeters and musicians so large that their accommodation over three weeks cost the Duke more than 16,000 *livres* and required a special delivery of coin from the treasury at Dijon. They were charged with finalising the great peace that would eventually transfer the Crown of France to the house of Plantagenet.[46]

A great council had been summoned to Troyes to approve the terms. It opened a few days after the Duke's arrival at the end of March 1420. 'Barons, noblemen, prelates, councillors, notables and representatives of the towns' had been commanded to attend, but in the disordered state of northern France it seems unlikely that many of them came. The King presided from the throne, surveying the hall with benign and vacant eyes as the Duke of Burgundy's chancellor, Jean de Thoisy, opened the first session. By command of the King and Queen and on the advice of his councillors at Paris and Troyes, he intoned, the Duke of Burgundy had negotiated a treaty with the King of England. Jean de Thoisy summarised its terms. They had been agreed, he said, not in a spirit of mere vengeance but in the true interests of the Crown in order to bring an end to a catastrophic war and restore France to her former prosperity. Perhaps to the surprise of the assembly's Burgundian managers, the dignitaries present did not simply wave the proposals through. The discussions extended over several days. According to an English account there were many 'conflicting opinions, irrelevant arguments and sterile controversies'. The supporters of the treaty spoke of the wisdom and godliness of the English King and the wickedness of 'he who calls himself Dauphin'. But some of those present raised the old doubts about whether it was legally possible to disinherit the Dauphin and transfer the kingdom to a foreign prince claiming in the female line. Others wanted to see the terms improved. Most of their reservations reflected concerns about the status of Charles VI during his lifetime and the territorial and political integrity of France after his death. They wanted Normandy restored as an integral part of the French kingdom and the Dauphin's provinces reunited with the rest of France, by force if necessary. They wanted

the property of exiles who had fled before the English armies restored. They wanted guarantees against illegal taxes and safeguards for France's customs and institutions. With these amendments and additions, the Duke of Burgundy's proposals were finally pronounced to be 'appropriate, advantageous and necessary'. On this note the assembly closed on about 9 April. Two days later, on the 11th, the Duke of Burgundy gave a grand banquet for the English ambassadors before they left to report to Henry V at Rouen.[47]

The terms, with the great council's additions and amendments, were taken to Paris at the end of April. On 29 April they were read out before a packed gathering of councillors, judges and prominent citizens in the chamber of the Parlement. Unlike the great council they had no reservations. The whole gathering, according to the official minute, 'answered *in turba* crying Yes through many mouths'. On the following day the document was formally presented to the King of England in the castle of Pontoise by a delegation of French royal councillors from both Paris and Troyes, led by those notable Burgundian stalwarts the Chancellor Eustache de Laitre and the First President of the Parlement Philippe de Morvilliers. Henry V accepted in principle almost all of the modifications. It was agreed that the treaty would be formally concluded in the presence of both kings at Troyes. Yet even now fears of treachery haunted Henry. He insisted that English garrisons should be installed in the principal strongholds along his route to Troyes, at the bridge of Charenton and the walled towns of Provins and Nogent-sur-Seine.[48]

The English King entered Troyes on 20 May 1420. He came with his brother the Duke of Clarence, his uncle the Duke of Exeter, most of the principal noblemen of his army and an escort of 2,500 mounted men. His passage across northern France had aroused intense curiosity among onlookers, many of whom can have had only the vaguest idea of what was going on. The citizens of Paris had crammed onto the walls by the Porte Saint-Martin to watch him go past, his helmet and gilded coronet carried before him. A large crowd turned out to see him received at the gates of Troyes by the Duke of Burgundy, surrounded by his councillors and captains, the first time that the two men had met. Upon his arrival Henry was brought at once before Charles VI, 'our adversary of France' as English Chancery draftsmen had called him for so many years. It was an awkward encounter. The hall was packed. The French King was seated on a gilded throne at the far end of the hall, dressed and posed like a doll. He sat immobile and expressionless as Henry advanced the length of the hall and bowed low before him, uttering 'respectful and gracious' words. Charles VI shifted slightly in his

seat. The Queen, Princess Catherine and his councillors and household officers stood nervously around the throne. Eventually he found some words. ‘Oh, it’s you,’ he said, ‘Well, since you are here, welcome!’[49]

On the following morning the treaty was concluded in the cathedral of Troyes. Charles VI was too ill to attend. The Duke of Burgundy and the Queen transacted the business in his name under a power of attorney which he had executed in a moment of relative lucidity some weeks before. Henry V entered the church from a transept accompanied by forty of his councillors while the Queen, the Duke of Burgundy and the princess entered from the opposite side with forty supporters of their own. The two processions met in the middle of the church and walked side by side up to the high altar. There the terms of the treaty were read out by the clerks in stentorian voices in French and Latin. Each side declared its assent and the instrument was sealed. Henry and Catherine were then betrothed by exchange of promises and holding of hands. The whole gathering swore to observe the peace. The Duke of Burgundy, followed by the other Frenchmen present, swore to obey Henry V as Regent of France while Charles VI was still alive and as King after his death. Then, when the proceedings were over, the treaty was publicly proclaimed in the nave of the cathedral and published to the sound of trumpets in the streets outside and in the encampment of the English army beyond the walls. On 2 June, after the canonical interval had passed, Henry’s marriage to Catherine of France was celebrated by the Archbishop of Sens in the church of St John, the parish church for the market district of Troyes where the bridegroom had his lodgings.[50]

In its main lines the treaty of Troyes followed the original deal made between Henry V and Philip of Burgundy at Arras in December 1419. The extinction of the ninety-year-old Valois dynasty and its replacement by the English Plantaganets was achieved by a few brief clauses. The French King declared that by marrying his daughter Henry V would become his adopted son. He was to exercise all the powers of the Crown while Charles was alive. During his regency public documents would continue to be issued in the King’s name and under his seal. Proper provision would be made to enable him to maintain a dignified household. Henry would be referred to in royal letters and ordinances as ‘our dearest son Henry, King of England and heir of France’. After Charles’s death he would succeed him on the French throne and his heirs after him. Indeed the Crown would remain in the line of the English royal house even if Henry’s marriage to Catherine was childless. ‘All disputes, all hatreds, rancour and resentment and all fighting

between the kingdoms of England and France and their peoples and allies shall be silenced,' declared the twenty-fifth article. But although the two countries would be ruled by the same king and be joined in an indissoluble alliance, they were nevertheless to remain separate realms, each with its own laws, customs and institutions which the King would be required to respect. Careful provision was made in the treaty for those individuals and regions which did not currently acknowledge Charles VI's authority. Henry V undertook to 'labour with all his strength' to conquer the places held by the 'party commonly known as Dauphinists or Armagnacs'. In view of the Dauphin's 'horrible and enormous crimes', neither Henry nor Philip of Burgundy would have any dealings with him without the consent of the other and of the Estates-General.

Special terms were agreed for Normandy and other areas conquered by the English since 1415. This was a sensitive issue for Henry V and one which had much exercised the great council at Troyes. The treaty provided that the conquered territories would be ruled separately from the rest of France until Henry became King, when they would be reintegrated with the rest of the realm. But complete integration was impossible because Henry expected to depend on Normandy as his power base in the new Lancastrian kingdom of France. He was not prepared to undo the new land settlement in the province or expropriate the English military aristocracy which he had endowed there, even in favour of Burgundian sympathisers. So while churchmen would recover their confiscated lands and benefices in Normandy as of right, lay landowners would not. Even loyal Burgundians would be entitled only to equivalent lands confiscated from Dauphinists in other provinces. Nothing at all was said about the boundaries or the status of Gascony, whose transfer to the French realm would have been contrary to numerous undertakings given by the English kings to the Gascons over the years. Nor about Calais, which was presumably to remain an extra-territorial enclave of England on France's Channel coast. These were difficult issues which, perhaps wisely, were shelved.[51]

When the news of the treaty reached Paris it was received with the same acclamations of joy and bell-ringing which had greeted every failed peace since the beginning of the civil war. The municipality lost no time in declaring their happiness and their loyalty to the new Regent. 'Sinful hands kill with bloodied axes while voices sing out hymns in praise of peace,' was Alain Chartier's venomous comment. Dauphinists like Chartier and Robert Blondel cursed the Parisians, whom they accused of driving the Duke of Burgundy into the arms of the English and delivering Charles VI

trussed and bound to his enemies. Yet by now there was a weary, ritual quality about the capital's celebrations and a detectable undercurrent of doubt and fear. Paris was no longer the city which had risen with the Cabochians. The old political causes had faded with the departure of the government to Troyes, the flight of the princes and the death of John the Fearless. The mood in the streets was largely driven by tribal resentments provoked by the poisonous legacy of the Count of Armagnac and the blockade being maintained by the Dauphin's northern garrisons.

The cantor and official historiographer of Saint-Denis, Michel Pintoin, was a sensitive recorder of the capital's mood. He himself welcomed the treaty as a statesmanlike agreement, which was the common view in the official circles in which he moved. Among the administrative and judicial elite support for the treaty followed naturally from their dependence on the patronage of the house of Burgundy, reinforced by the inner solidarities of a close-knit group who had come together in the aftermath of the June days of 1418. These men had nothing to hope for from a Dauphinist victory. But Pintoin knew that only a minority agreed with them. Many people found it hard to accept the change of dynasty. Others were resigned to it but only because of the Dauphin's military failure. The mass of ordinary Parisians understood very little of the political background, thought Pintoin, but doubted whether a union between nations so different in language, laws and customs could last. Even in a city from which almost every avowed Dauphinist had been expelled there were men who actively opposed the dual monarchy. Henry V received regular reports of 'rumbling and griping' against it during the summer.[52]

Pierre Fenin, the Provost of the Burgundian city of Arras, perhaps the most dispassionate recorder of these events, spoke for many of his countrymen when he wrote that the change of dynasty 'seemed very strange but for the moment there was no alternative'.[53] This was probably the reaction of most well-informed people in the north. The treaty was a disagreeable necessity. It offered the only prospect of peace while the English King and his army remained the most powerful political force in France and neither the Burgundians nor the Dauphinists were strong enough to prevail on their own. The Dauphin was widely regarded as the titular head of an untrustworthy cabal whose conduct at Montereau had made a united front against the English impossible. He did not look like the national saviour which hindsight has made of him. The pious orthodoxies of modern French historiography, which regarded the treaty of Troyes as a base betrayal of their national allegiance, engineered by a foreign Queen and a clique of traitors, did not seem

as obvious to contemporary Frenchmen as it did to Jules Michelet writing in the middle of the nineteenth century in the high noon of French patriotism. To the Queen, the Dauphin's cause must have seemed lost anyway, and she had the interests of the rest of her family to consider: her husband and her daughters. To the great council at Troyes and probably to many others in the provinces of the north the dual monarchy was not a betrayal of France. It was a route to national survival, a way of preserving its territorial integrity and perhaps the only alternative to an English annexation of the western provinces which no one seemed able to stop. The Dauphin had nothing comparable to offer them.

The first test of public opinion was the long process of taking oaths of loyalty to the new regime which followed immediately upon the sealing of the treaty. On the day after the ceremony some 1,500 ministers, officials and householders of Troyes filed through the cathedral to swear the oath before the royal commissioners. On 30 May the ambassadors of Henry V, accompanied by representatives of the Duke of Burgundy, appeared in the chamber of the Parlement in Paris. Speaking halting French in thick accents they called for similar oaths from the crowd of prominent officials, judges and citizens gathered there. The occasion was evidently more tense than the smooth record in the clerk's journal suggests. The Parlement had recently got cold feet about the change of dynasty and had declined to be represented in the great council at Troyes. However, its First President, Philippe de Morvilliers, had sworn the oath at Troyes and when it came to the point his colleagues in Paris did the same. So did the leaders of the citizenry, who had all along been the main advocates of an accommodation with England. The pattern was very similar when the commissioners toured the northern provinces. Among the towns there were some dissenters, but the only serious opposition came from Tournai, a self-governing city with a powerful Dauphinist faction which was determined not to take sides. The city closed its gates in the commissioners' faces. Its leading men, assembled in the town hall, declared that 'as long as the King our lord lives we shall have no lord but him and will swear no oath to any other'.[54]

Most of the resistance, however, came not from covert Dauphinists or former Armagnacs but from the Duke of Burgundy's closest collaborators. The Captain of Paris, Philip Count of Saint-Pol, had stayed away from the meeting in the Parlement chamber. When the English commissioners went to find him in his quarters he told them that although he approved of the peace he regarded it as a personal slight to be asked to swear an oath. He would not do it, he said, without the express instructions of the King. The captain of the

Bastille, Antoine de Vergy, who had been with John the Fearless on the bridge at Montereau, also refused along with all his garrison. John of Luxembourg and his brother Louis Bishop of Thérouanne refused to swear until Philip of Burgundy ordered them to. The Prince of Orange had been present at Henry's marriage and sat with Henry V on the French royal council but was never willing to take the oath. The towns of Philip of Burgundy's domains were divided. Those closest to the fighting swore readily enough. But others further from the pressure of events refused. Dijon held out for nearly two years before accepting the treaty on the direct orders of the Duke. Some of these stalwart partisans of the Duke of Burgundy were hedging their bets at a time when the future seemed particularly uncertain. Some of them changed their minds after Henry V's first campaigns as Regent, when his regime in France began to look more secure. Guy de La Trémoille Count of Joigny, who had led the Burgundian contingent on the council at Troyes in the difficult months after the murder at Montereau, had publicly declared that those who swore would all lose their heads one day, but he was soon won over with ample grants out of land confiscated from the Dauphinists. The Luxembourg brothers in due course became the staunchest anglophiles of Philip of Burgundy's council, and within two months of refusing the oath for himself the Count of Saint-Pol was given the job of administering it to others.[55]

From the distance of Poitiers, Bourges and Toulouse, the Dauphin's councillors and officials had followed the whole process with mounting anger and incredulity. Towards the end of April one of them wrote a furious denunciation of the 'damnable, unjust and detestable' treaty, which was copied into the registers of the Parlement of Poitiers. It marked, this man thought, the final destruction of the dynasty and the subjugation of the French realm by its English enemies, a 'race so brutal and criminal that even their animals have more charm than they do'. The King of France himself had no right to alienate a crown which he held from God. Not even he could disinherit his son without the formality of legal process. How, he asked, could the naive Catherine have agreed to dishonour her own brother by marrying his enemy? How could so many notable Frenchmen swear oaths which repudiated all their duties to the Crown? How could they buy a fictitious peace at the expense of the whole population of the country? 'Blessed God, loyalty, justice and truth, where have you fled?'[56]

The treaty of Troyes forced many Frenchmen to reflect on the springs of loyalty, patriotism and identity, themes which have never lost their resonance in human affairs. The result was the birth of a new and more intense French patriotism whose focus shifted from

the person of the King to the nation. The King was not only a man. He was an institution symbolising the continuity of a political community. Militarily and politically weak, discredited by the events at Montereau and disinherited by his father, the Dauphin's claim to the allegiance of Frenchmen rested not on his personal qualities but on the legally questionable character of the treaty combined with the fact that he was French. The treaty was a fraud, declared the Dauphin's representatives at the papal court. It had been imposed on a witless King contrary to law and executed with seals controlled by the Duke of Burgundy. Addressing a wider audience the prince's propagandists made the most of their master's legitimacy and his French birth. 'Show that you were born Frenchmen,' Alain Chartier urged his compatriots. For Chartier loyalty to the French claimant was part of the law of nature which 'has fashioned every one of you to uphold the common interest of the land in which you were born', just as the birds of the air defended their nests and the lion and the bear their lairs against intruders. Writing to his diocesans in December 1419 from the safe distance of Bourges, the Bishop of Paris Gérard de Montaigu had presented them with a simple choice between legitimacy and tyranny. To this man the English government of Normandy might well be effective and just, as many people clearly thought it was, but it was by definition a tyranny because it was foreign. It followed that every 'good Frenchman' owed a duty to support the Dauphin's cause.

This distinction between 'good' and 'bad' Frenchmen, between loyal men worthy of their birth on the one hand and vulgar traitors on the other, became a constant theme in the work of Chartier, Blondel, Jouvenel and other Dauphinist writers who regarded the English King's ability to find French allies as symptoms of a perverted mentality. Language like this would become conventional when the war was won, but in 1420 it marked the appearance of a new political sensibility. We must 'correct the misconceptions of simple men', Jean Jouvenel des Ursins would write.[57]

We cannot know how many men ever read these pieces or what influence they had upon the unconverted. In the years which followed the treaty of Troyes it is unlikely that many misconceptions were corrected among the demoralised and indifferent mass of the French population. These were dark years for the Dauphin's cause. But the rise of a new national myth may well have made men readier to look to the Dauphin when the military tide eventually turned. Blondel's *Lament of the Good Frenchmen* was written in bad Latin but was soon translated into better French. Chartier's main rhetorical writings survive in a very large number of

manuscripts and were even translated into English. Their works were only a small part of the remarkable outpouring of polemical literature whose appeal extended far beyond the limited numbers who had heard of their authors. As John the Fearless had discovered, there was a large popular audience for well-honed propaganda. Patriotism made good rhetoric. The same themes would one day find their way in cruder form into sermons, many of them officially inspired, into improvised theatre put on in market-places and on the steps of churches, and into the doggerel ballads sung by itinerant musicians, many of whom were in the pay of one side or the other:

> Entre vous, genz de village
> Qui aimez le roy françoys,
> Prenez chascun bon courage
> Pour combattre les Engloys.* 58

Notes

1
Reports: *Reg. Châlons*, 133; *Bonenfant, 185–6. Paris: Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 317–20; *Ord.*, xii, 268–73; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 374–6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 355–6; *Dépenses*, no. 935; AN KK 1009, fol. 2vo (*échevins*). Elsewhere: *Dépenses*, nos 886, 902, 913; *Reg. Châlons*, 133.

2
Comptes E. Bourg., ii, nos 3545–7, 3549, 3553, 3555, 3565, 3591, 3592–605, 4013, 4024, 4125, 4129, 4171–2, 4974, 4975, 4978–85, 5020, 5022, 5068–9, 5129, 5216; *Auctarium Chartul. U. Paris*, iv, no. 2143.

3
Dépenses, no. 1120; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 197–8, 313, 316–21, 322–6, 334–5, 343–5; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 356; *Extr. Reg. Tournai*, i, 182, 184–90; *Mém. France et Bourgogne*, i, 292; *Reg. Châlons*, 154–7; *Inv. AC Amiens*, ii, 31; 'Lettres closes', no. 11 (Reims).

4
Journ. B. Paris, 135; Rapport Arch. Dijon, 110; *Bonenfant, 185–6; *Dépenses*, nos 890, 895, 898–9, 902, 910, 1507–8; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, nos 4374, 4377; Chauvelays, 265.

5
Chastellain, 'Chron.', i, 49; *Inv. AD Nord*, i (2), 75; Bonenfant, 50–3; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, 886, 1085; *Itin. Ph. le Bon*, 1–5.

6
Waurin, *Rec. cron.,* ii, 286; *Foed.*, ix, 801; *Orig. Letters*, I. i, 1–2; *Lettres des rois,* ii, 396–7.

7
Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 376–8; *Bonenfant, 196; AN KK17, fols 71vo, 72vo; *Beaucourt, i, 186–9.

8
Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 233–5; *St Albans Chron.,* ii, 742; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 378–82; *Foed.*, ix, 796–8.

9
*Bonenfant, 191–5.

10
Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 237–40; *Bonenfant, 194 [7], 203–9; *Cron. Norm.*, 53; *Journ. B. Paris*, 131–2.
11
Itin. Ph. le Bon, 1–2; *Rapport Arch. Dijon,* 109–13; *Bonenfant, 208–9 [18]. Pavilly: *Comptes E. Bourg.,* i, no. 1177.
12
Foed., ix, 803, 827–8; *Bonenfant, 42, 206–9, 212, 217 [4], 218 [6]. On Porrée: 'Chron. Cordeliers', 247. On Lannoy: *Oeuvres*, 15–16, 49–50.
13
*Bonenfant, 212–15. Operations: *Foed.*, ix, 810; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 238–41; *Cron. Norm.*, 53–4.
14
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 362–3; *Extr. Reg. Tournai*, i, 192; *Bonenfant, 216–21 (memo).
15
Foed., ix, 812–24, 827–9; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, nos 1113, 1172; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 363–4; *L'honneur de la couronne*, 135–7; *Bonenfant, 224–7, 233–6, 239–40. In April 1420, Philip was granted the castleries of Péronne, Montdidier and Roye, comprising most of the Vermandois: *Beauvillé, i, 523–4.
16
Guenée (1993), 48–9; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 351–4; *Plancher, iii, no. 309; *Mon. Hist.*, no. 1950; *Inv. Ord. Parl.*, no. 344; *Bonenfant, 186–91, esp. [8]; *Reg. Châlons*, 142–50; *Beaucourt, i, 181–3; Besse, *Recueil*, 323–4; *Mém. France et Bourgogne*, i, 275–8.
17
Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 328; *Bonenfant, 238 [5], 186–91; *Beaucourt, i, 181–3; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 354. Pot: *Beaucourt, i, 191; *Bonenfant, 199–203. Henry V: *Bonenfant, 230–1 [1], 232–3 [2]; *F. Schneider, *Der Europäische Friedenskongress von Arras* (1919), 194; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, i, 381; Chastellain, 'Chron.', i, 72.
18
Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 231–3; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 386; *Déprez, 346–53; *Lettres des rois*, ii, 385–7 (misdated).
19
Bonenfant, 131–2, *211–12, 232 [4], 233 [2]; 'Réponse d'un bon et loyal français', 124; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, 3569, 5225, 5239; *Dépenses*, nos 651–2, 656, 677, 965; *Ord.*, xii, 273–7. On Robesart: Bonenfant, 119–25.
20
Carolus-Barré (1988), 385; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 315, 360, 366–7, 381, iv, 103; Fenin, *Mém.*, 121–2, 124–5. Roye: *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, no. 1046. Crépy: *Dépenses*, nos 926, 1519; *Reg. Châlons*, 178–9. La Hire was in possession of Vitry in 1422: Raoulet, 'Chron.', 176. Paris: *Journ. B. Paris*, 136–9.
21
Roye: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, 368–71; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 392; Chastellain, 'Chron.', i, 91–7; *Dépenses,* no. 717; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, nos 865, 868, 1046–7, 1121, 1140, 1220, 1253, 1435, 1467–9, 1473, 1476–7. Tremblay/Dammartin: *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 390–2; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 351–2. Crépy: *Itin. Ph. le Bon*, 5–6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 374–6; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 246; 'Livre des trahisons', 148–51; 'Lettere di mercanti', 197–8; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, nos 846, 1029, 1438, 1470–2.

22
Foed., ix, 857–8, 863, 874, 889; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 349–53; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 386–8; PRO C64/12, m. 14. Diversions: *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, nos 885, 1447.
23
*Déprez, 350; Thompson (1991), 8–12; Favier (1974), 184–5; Little, 124, 132–7, 147, 171–2; Chevalier (1975), 217–19, 230–6; Mollat (1952), 34–5.
24
*Déprez, 348–9; *Preuves Bretagne,* ii, 988–90; *Cosneau, 496; *Beaucourt, i, 333.
25
Foed., viii, 791–2, 794–5; *Lib. Pluscard.*, i, 353; *Parl. Rolls,* ix, 257 [22]. Numbers: BN Fr. 25710/3; cf. Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 112. The advance guard of Douglas of Drumlanrig had two archers for each man-at-arms: BN Clair 841, pp. 721–5. If the same ratio was observed for the main army, there would have been about 1,500 men-at-arms (with the same number of servants) and 3,000 archers. English experience suggests that merchant ships could carry on average about 0.25 men per ton of carrying capacity with horses, or about 1 man per ton without: Sumption, iii, 890nn28, 29. The contracted Castilian capacity of 6,000 tons could therefore have carried the army only if they brought no horses. With the addition of French and Scottish ships, some horses could have been shipped, but the merchant fleets of Dauphinist France and Scotland were small. Command: *Beaucourt, i, 333; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 112, 114; M. Brown (1998), 216–17.
26
Brittany: *Cosneau, 496; AN KK53, fol. 5. Blockade, battle: *Reg. St-Jean d'Angély,* iii, 307, 307–8; *Circourt, 377; *Dos primeras cron.*, 143; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 398–400.
27
BN PO 152/Avaugour/6; AN KK53, fols 2vo, 5, 8; BL Add. Chart. 278, 284, 3528–9; BN Clair. 43, p. 3219; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 114. Languedoc: Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 94; *Inv. AC Toulouse,* i, 41–2 (AA3/265). Mission to Scotland: BN Fr. 20887/6; *Beaucourt, i, 332–3. Maine: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 358.
28
*Beaucourt, i, 329. Revenues: Steel, 159–60.
29
Parl. Rolls, ix, 231–2 [1–2], 233–7 [8–10, 12–13], x, 173–6 [35]; Myers (1940).
30
Bedford: *Foed.*, ix, 830 (the decision had been made by 21 Nov. 1419: PRO C64/11, m. 4d); PRO E403/643, mm. 22, 23 (6, 12 Mar.); E403/645, m. 2 (9 May); PRO E101/49/36. James: *Cal. Doc. Scot.,* iv, nos 895, 898; *Rapport Arch. Lille,* 140; **Cop. S. Andree,* 271–2; *Lib. Pluscard.*, i, 347–8.
31
Beaucourt, i, 196–200.
32
Dognon (1889), 484–6, 489–93; *Cartul. Carcassonne,* v, 353 (misdated); Gilles, 37–40; Vaissète, ix, 1058–64, 1069; Dognon (1895), 378–83; *Ord.*, xi, 59–60; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 407–8; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 376. Duchess: *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, nos 3551, 3560, 4978, 5071; Besse, *Recueil*, 327–8, 329–31.

33
Chartier, *Quad. Invect.*, 64; Beaucourt, i, 357–65, 391–2, 405–6; Gilles, 39–43.
34
Dieudonné, 491, 494–5; Saulcy (1877), 31, 37, 73–4 (adding Lyon, Mirabel-aux-Baronnies and St-André-lès-Avignon); *Ord.*, xi, 23–6; *Rec. doc. monnaies*, ii, 240–1, 254. Competition for bullion: *Dépenses*, nos 1096–7.
35
Chartier, *Quad. Invect.*, 72, 73; 'Débats et appointements', 69; Contamine (1972), 250–1, 253–73, 630–2. 4,000: *Beaucourt, i, 439; cf. ibid., 425–6.
36
'Débats et appointements', 69; Chartier, *Quad. Invect.*, 25.
37
Dauphin: Fenin, *Mém.*, 195; Chastellain, 'Chron.', ii, 180–1. Foix: BL Add. MSS 38525, fols 92–92vo (Bayonne to Henry V, 4 May 1419, from Cotton Caligula D V, now lost). Bourbon: *Titres Bourbon*, ii, no. 5150; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 357; Leguai (1962), 94, 115–20. Rieux: Anselme, vi, 806–7; Chartier, *Quad. Invect.*, 74. Pay rates: *Foed.*, x, 163 (Dec. 1421).
38
Bastard of Alençon: BN Fr. 20372/82. Ambroise: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 357–8, 359; *Triger, 138–43; Bouton, 49. Mont-St-M.: **Chron. Mont-St-Michel*, i, 88–91, 91, 93–5; *Extr. rég. dons*, 136. Avranches, Pontorson: *Chron. Mont-St-Michel*, i, 22; *Rôles Normands*, nos 215, 617; PRO E364/61, fol. 2d (Alington); Gruel, *Chron.*, 22.
39
BN Fr. 26043/5485; Fr. 6211/366; *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 988–90; Oxford MS Bodley 201, fol. 281, cited in *Michel, i, 118n^{1}; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 244–5; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 744; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 357–9, 376; Foed., ix, 885.
40
*Cosneau, 494–7.
41
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 357, iv, 29; Beaucourt, i, 193; *Lettres de Jean V,* ii, nos 1375, 1381; *Foed.*, ix, 809, 832; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 400.
42
Preuves Bretagne, ii, 1000, 1074; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 29; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, v, 400; Le Baud, 461 (identifying councillors). Revolt of 1408–10: Borderie, iv, 156–8.
43
Preuves Bretagne, ii, 998–9, 1070–5; *Cosneau, 494–7.
44
Preuves Bretagne, ii, 999–1001, 1003–4, 1075–6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 31–2; Le Baud, 456.
45
Preuves Bretagne, ii, 1001; *Foed.*, ix, 876–7, 894–5. Richemont's movements: PRO E364/56, m. 5d (Watreton); E364/57, m. 3d (Burton).
46
Boutiot, ii, 412–13; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 374–5, 377–8; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, nos 702, 954–64, 1297, 1352, 1462, ii, no. 5222.
47
Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 343, 359–62; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 378–9; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 247; Chastellain, 'Chron.', i, 115–16; *Foed.*, ix, 877–82. English departure: *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, nos 1297, 1439 (p. 461).
48

Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 362; Foed., ix, 880–1; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 247–8.

49
Foed., ix, 881, 906, 907; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 750; *Journ. B. Paris*, 139; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 250–1; Chastellain, 'Chron.', i, 131–3.

50
Foed., ix, 906–8, 911; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 365, 366–8; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 750–2. Powers: PRO E30/409.

51
Grands traités, 102–15.

52
Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 432, 436–8; *Auctarium Chartul. U. Paris*, ii, 274; *Foed.*, ix, 910; Chartier, *Oeuvres latines*, 221–4, 239; Blondel, *Oeuvres*, i, 27–8, 29; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 282 ('griping').

53
Fenin, *Mém.*, 137.

54
Foed., ix, 904–6; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 331–3, 340–5, 365–9; *Sauval, iii, 283–97; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 2–6; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, no. 1465; *Extr. Reg. Tournai*, i, 206–7, 209–10, 211, 212, 213–17

55
St-Pol: BL Cotton Caligula D V, fols 75–6. Vergy: Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 282; Thompson (1991), 86, Table 4. Luxembourgs: Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, ii, 9. Dijon: Plancher, iv, 44. Orange: Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 382–3, Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 389, iv, 78–9; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 96; *Ord.*, xi, 99 (council). La Trémoille: *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, no. 3569; *Lettres des rois*, ii, 379; *Rec. doc. Poitou*, xxvi, 375.

56
'Réponse d'un bon et loyal français'.

57
BL Cotton Tiberius B XII, fols 121vo–127 (papal court); Chartier, *Poetical Works,* 419; Chartier, *Quad. Invect.*, 15–16; *Déprez, 350–3; Jouvenel, 'Audite Celi' (*Écrits politiques*, i, 184).

58
Blondel, 'Complainte' (*Oeuvres*, i, 55–151); Chartier, *Quad. Invect.*, pp. xxvii–xxix; *Fifteenth century English translations of Alain Chartier's Le Traité de l'Esperance and Le Quadriloge Invectif,* 2 vols, ed. M. S. Blayney (1974–80); Krynen (1993), 300–1, 308–38; Lewis (1965); Pons (1991); Thompson (1991), 171, 177–8; *Rec. chants hist.*, i, 300.

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Come, village men who love the French King, take up your courage and fight against the English.

CHAPTER XVII

Melun and Paris: Disaster at Baugé, 1420–1421

In the third week of May 1420, as Henry V's cavalcade reached Troyes, his brother John Duke of Bedford, accompanied by King James of Scotland, sailed from Southampton with 300 men-at-arms and 900 archers to join the army in France. They were carried to Harfleur in a fleet led by the latest of the King's 'great ships', the enormous three-masted *Grace Dieu*, at 1,400 tons burden the largest ship built for the Royal Navy before the seventeenth century and 'the fairest that ever man saw', if we are to believe the Duke of Gloucester's enthusiastic report of the occasion. Yet the *Grace Dieu* had been built for a world that seemed to have vanished. With the English and their Burgundian allies now firmly established from Flanders to the march of Brittany, England's control of the Channel was barely contested. The great fleets of Genoese and Castilian carracks which had been such a formidable threat when she was laid down in 1416 had vanished. The Genoese had withdrawn from the fray after their two defeats and were in the process of repairing their relations with England. The Castilians, who never recognised the treaty of Troyes, had promised the Dauphin a 'great and very powerful fleet' of galleys and sailing carracks in the coming season, but they had no base north of La Rochelle from which to operate.[1]

For Henry V the treaty of Troyes was a remarkable personal achievement. It secured, at least on paper, all that he or his forebears had claimed since 1337 and far more than any of them had really hoped to obtain. Explaining the treaty to the King's ally and brother-in-law Louis Count Palatine, the English ambassador was lost for words: 'it is myghty and vertuows, it is fair and graciows, and it is swete and amorows'. For other Englishmen it marked the final peace between England and France which had proved so elusive before the murder of John the Fearless. Now there would be 'reste and union of both rewmes for evermore', wrote the Duke of Exeter from Troyes to a correspondent in England. Yet these hopes were hardly realistic as Henry and his advisers were well aware. Henry had committed himself to reuniting the French kingdom. Far from marking the end of the war the treaty was the beginning of a new war against the Dauphin who occupied more than half of it.[2]

Politically the most urgent task was to evict the Dauphinist garrisons around Paris. As far as the Parisians were concerned the test of the new regime would be its ability to lift the blockade of the traffic of the Marne and the Oise and the valley of the Seine. On the day after his marriage Henry V cancelled a tournament in his honour and announced that the campaign would open on the following morning. On 4 June 1420 he marched west out of Troyes accompanied by his bride, the King and Queen of France, the King of Scotland and the Duke of Burgundy. With most of his English troops tied down in garrisons in Normandy, Henry V was able to put only modest forces of his own into the field. He had had no more than about 2,000 troops with him at Troyes. They were shortly joined by the 1,200 men of Bedford's companies and by some 700 German troops brought from Heidelberg by the Count Palatine. These forces took the English King's payroll strength to about 4,000 men. The Burgundian contingent was probably larger. At its highest point the entire Anglo-Burgundian army must have numbered between 8,000 and 10,000 men in addition to *gros varlets* and other hangers-on. Their first objective was Sens.[3]

The Dauphin's councillors had been expecting this for several months and had prepared the defences of their northern strongholds. The captains had returned to their posts to take command. The garrisons had been reinforced with French and Scottish troops. Large amounts of cash had been taken under escort to pay off their arrears. Sens, however, had not been a high priority. The cathedral city on the Yonne was held by a garrison of 300, too few for a town of its size. Stores were low. The inhabitants were uncooperative. They sent a messenger to meet the army as it approached bearing a promise to surrender. If Charles VI ordered them to open their gates, they told their Dauphin's captain, they would comply. He managed to keep control for a few days. But once the English had stormed the tower at the end of the Yonne bridge the place was untenable. On 11 June 1420 it surrendered.[4]

On 16 June 1420 the army arrived outside Montereau. It was an emotional moment for Philip of Burgundy. The town and castle were defended by Guillaume de Chaumont lord of Guitry. He had been its captain at the time of the murder of John the Fearless and had been present on the bridge with the Dauphin. He had about 500 men under his command. Guitry tried to hold the town on the south bank of the Yonne. But the walls were weak and on 23 June the besiegers carried them by assault. The garrison fled headlong over the bridge into the citadel, losing several of their number on the way. As soon as they were in possession of the town the Burgundians made enquiries about the burial place of John the

Fearless. They were directed to the church of Notre-Dame, where the grave-pit was opened up and the body found, still dressed in the clothes in which he had been murdered, his skull stove in by Guillaume Bataille's sword and Tanneguy du Châtel's axe. Two days later a solemn requiem Mass was said over the body in the presence of Philip of Burgundy, the King of England, the Duke of Clarence and a great press of English and Burgundian soldiers. The coffin was then loaded onto a barge on the Yonne for the first stage of its journey to the mausoleum of the Valois dukes of Burgundy at Champmol outside Dijon.

By this time pontoon bridges had been constructed over the Yonne and the Seine which enabled the fortress to be closely invested from all sides. Montereau was an old castle and vulnerable to artillery fire on the landward side to the east. Henry V had eleven prisoners who had been captured on the fall of the town brought to the edge of the moat and threatened to kill them unless the castle surrendered. The prisoners implored the soldiers on the walls to surrender. Resistance was hopeless anyway, they said. The lord of Guitry told them to fend for themselves. Henry had a gibbet erected in full view of the walls and hanged them all one by one. They died in vain, for the castle was doomed. The English had built timber stone-throwers, which began to do serious damage to the roofs and topwork of the towers. The Duke of Burgundy's bombards arrived by river from Sens and were unpacked from the barges. Within a few days the lord of Guitry opened negotiations. The gates were opened on 1 July and the garrison were allowed to withdraw under safe-conduct, with the exception of those who had had any part in the death of John the Fearless. Guitry himself had been deeply implicated. But he succeeded in blustering his way out along with his men.[5]

The capture of Sens and Montereau was followed almost immediately by the fall of Villeneuve-sur-Yonne, which was surprised at night by a Burgundian ladder party, and by the occupation of the important river port of Joigny a few miles upstream. These conquests opened up the river route from Burgundy into the Seine valley, securing the army's logistical tail. Flotillas of barges brought food, building materials and artillery down the Yonne and the Seine to keep the army supplied as it approached its next objective, the fortress of Melun.

Melun was a town of the royal domain at the eastern edge of the rich plateau of Brie, which was traditionally assigned to the dowager queens of France as a residence. It was among the strongest fortresses of the realm and one of the principal bases from which the Dauphin's troops had maintained the blockade of Paris

since 1418. The medieval buildings have almost entirely disappeared beneath the modern town, but in the fifteenth century they must have been an impressive sight. Built on an island in the Seine forty miles upstream of Paris, the old town was dominated by the collegiate church of Notre-Dame at one end and the castle at the other. The castle, a rectangular keep with eight massive round towers, had been magnificently rebuilt by Charles V in the 1360s with the high, uniform walls characteristic of the military architecture of the period. Two heavily fortified bridges with gate-towers at each end connected it to walled suburbs on either side of the river. The defenders had strengthened the defences of the suburbs by recutting the dry ditches and using the spoil to build earthworks around the gates, on which they mounted artillery. Their operations were directed by the Dauphin's Marshal, Arnaud-Guilhem de Barbazan, and Pierre de Bourbon, the former Armagnac captain of Rouen. They commanded a garrison of about 600 to 700 troops, mostly Gascons with a few Scots. Unlike the garrison of Sens, they received unstinting support from the townsmen, who guaranteed the wages of the garrison and fought valiantly beside them.[6]

The Anglo-Burgundian army approached Melun from the east, arriving outside the walls on 8 July 1420. Philip of Burgundy occupied the right bank of the river on the Brie side of the town, supported by the Earls of Warwick and Huntingdon. Henry V marched north with the rest of the English army, crossing the Seine at Corbeil, and occupied the left bank towards the Gâtinais. Each corps dug itself in, constructing heavily fortified encampments to guard against sorties from the town and raids from the rear. A pontoon bridge was built across the Seine to allow communications between the two. Heavy guns were brought up from the arsenal at Dijon and mounted on the Burgundian lines. On 13 July the siege was formally opened when Charles VI, a sorry figure, ill-dressed and unkempt, was brought before the walls to summon the defenders to surrender. They gave him what had become the standard response: that they would gladly open their gates to him if he were alone but would not let in the King of England. A similar summons was issued on behalf of the King of Scotland to his own subjects in the town. As at Rouen Henry V was anxious to avoid unnecessary casualties, knowing how difficult it would be replace them. He refused to order an assault until the defences had been sufficiently damaged by artillery and mining. The German Count Palatine, impatient of the lack of action, was allowed to organise an attack from the north side with the support of the Burgundian contingents. But the result did much to bear out Henry's judgment. The first assault parties were

thrown back from the walls by murderous cannon fire and a hail of crossbow bolts from the wings. In the confusion which followed the defenders launched a powerful sortie, killing many of those who were waiting in the ditches for their turn to mount the scaling ladders. Within a short time of their arrival the besiegers were reconciled to a long wait while the defenders consumed their stores, the miners tunnelled their way beneath the ditch, the guns reduced the walls to rubble and the troops played cards and ball games to while away the days. The defenders had little time for leisure. They sortied from the gates against isolated groups of the besiegers, destroying siege works and taking prisoners. They listened out for mining and dug countermines. They repaired their walls by night as the artillery battered them by day. They posted sharpshooters on the walls, picking off prominent figures at long range. One Augustinian friar claimed a tally of more than sixty hits.[7]

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When the Dauphin returned from Languedoc at the beginning of June 1420 his first priority was not the war in the Seine valley but settling old scores with the Duke of Brittany. The crisis provoked by the kidnapping of John V was now approaching its conclusion. A large Breton army had been besieging Marguerite de Clisson in the castle of Champtoceaux since April. The castle had suffered serious damage and its defenders were starving. John V and his brother, after being moved from prison to prison for four months, were being held by Olivier de Blois in the fortress of Clisson overlooking the Sèvre Nantaise in Bas-Poitou. The first instinct of the Dauphin's councillors was to dig themselves deeper into the morass which they had made for themselves. They summoned an army to Saumur for 20 July. The Bretons believed, probably rightly, that the object was to relieve Champtoceaux.[8]

Faced with the prospect of a pitched battle with the Dauphin's army beneath the walls of the fortress, the Bretons looked to the English for help. They sent a delegation before Henry V at Melun to finalise the terms for the Count of Richemont's release. Another delegation was sent to Richemont himself in the Tower of London and a third to the Earl of Salisbury at Argentan to ask him to intervene with his army if the Dauphin attacked them. This diplomatic offensive seems to have brought home to the Dauphin the consequences of his folly. He decided to abandon the Penthièvres. Three of his councillors were sent before the Duchess of Brittany with an offer to procure the release of her husband from the clutches of Olivier de Blois. They included Tanneguy du Châtel, who understood the Bretons better than most and may have been

behind the change of front. Meanwhile Olivier de Blois was commanded to release his prisoner. Olivier refused to comply unless his prisoner promised to restore all his forfeited lands. He also demanded the hand of the Duke's daughter together with an enormous dowry including three major ducal castles. John V, who would have sealed anything put before him, agreed to all of this. But the Estates of Brittany repudiated it and pressed on with the siege of Champtoceaux. Seeing that the place was likely to be assaulted at any moment and his mother killed or captured, Olivier finally let the Duke go. John was taken from Clisson to the siege lines outside Champtoceaux and on 5 July was handed over to his household officers. A few days later the castle surrendered and Marguerite de Clisson submitted to the judgment of the Duke's courts.[9]

For the Dauphin, the damage was done. Although the Bretons no longer needed English protection they were not inclined to forgive. One of John V's first acts after his release was to send a herald to the English King with a request for a meeting to discuss his adherence to the treaty of Troyes. In the keep of Corbeil north of Melun, where Henry V had installed his household during the siege, the delegates of the Estates of Brittany finally agreed the terms for Richemont's release on 22 July. The agreement, which had presumably been approved by Richemont himself, provided for his release on parole for a period of two years until the end of September 1422. The delegates undertook that he would never be the Dauphin's ally or fight against the King of England or the Duke of Burgundy even after his parole had expired. And, although they did not undertake that he would adhere to the treaty of Troyes, they promised that he would do nothing inconsistent with it. These terms were the measure of the folly of Louvet and his friends who had sponsored the Penthièvre plot. In addition, they had destroyed the house of Blois after seventy years in which it had been the Crown's closest ally in Brittany. Champtoceaux was partially demolished after its surrender. Clisson was shortly conquered and with it the family's extensive lordships in Bas-Poitou. By the time that the Estates of Brittany condemned them to death and pronounced the definitive forfeiture of their domains, their castles and possessions were all in the Duke's hands and they themselves in exile far from the duchy.[10]

It was not until the Breton crisis was over that the Dauphin's council made any attempt to organise the relief of Melun. In September 1420, two months into the siege, an army finally began to muster at Beaugency on the Loire west of Orléans. The plan was to advance on the beleaguered town from the south by the valleys

of the Loing and the Seine. The designated commander was Philip of Orléans Count of Vertus. The enterprise was an embarrassing failure. Philip of Orléans fell ill and died at Beaugency while the army was still assembling, a major setback for the Dauphin's cause. The Dauphin himself withdrew to Berry after the muster and spent the rest of the year in the pleasure palace of the Duke of Berry at Mehun-sur-Yèvre. So when in the middle of September the army advanced to the Loing the command was shared between a number of captains of modest rank. It was a recipe for confusion and indecision. They paused at Montargis while scouts were sent forward to report on the enemy dispositions. The scouts returned full of foreboding. The besiegers, they said, were numerous and well dug in. There was no prospect of dislodging them. The army's leaders lost heart and ordered a retreat without striking a blow.[11]

The mystery of these weeks is the inactivity of the Dauphin's Scottish troops. They must have constituted at least half of the Dauphin's available military manpower. Yet eight months after their arrival in France he had yet to make effective use of them. They had been cantoned in Touraine and Berry or dispersed in garrisons and minor operations between the Loire and the Somme. Philip of Orléans had apparently intended to use them in the relief of Melun but there is no evidence that they took any part in the operation. The reasons must be a matter of speculation. The Earls of Buchan and Wigton had left for Scotland with the Archbishop of Reims at about the end of May to recruit more troops. They did not return until the autumn, too late to take part in any operations that year. They brought with them the promise of another Scottish army, to be led by the Earls of Douglas and Mar. But it would not arrive until the following spring. In the absence of Buchan and Wigton the army was commanded by the Lanarkshire magnate John Stewart of Darnley, a distant cousin of the royal line who had been appointed constable of the army. The reason for Darnley's immobility is unclear. Difficulties in paying the men's wages may have been part of it. But the most likely explanation is the presence with the English army of King James. After briefly participating in the siege of Melun at the beginning of July James had been sent back to Normandy. A delegation from the Scots in France led by Douglas of Drumlanrig visited him there in September and then proceeded to Melun to negotiate with the King of England at the very time that the relief operation was getting under way. The Earl of Buchan would probably have ignored the Scottish King's presence, as indeed he did in the following year. There was no love lost between these two Stewart cousins. But Darnley, a less powerful figure in Scotland, had to be more circumspect.[12]

By the end of September 1420 conditions inside Melun were rapidly deteriorating. A large number of buildings had been demolished by cannon and stone-throwers, forcing the inhabitants to live like troglodytes in cellars and basements. The defenders had exhausted their stores. The garrison had eaten their horses. Disease was beginning to spread. People began to look for ways to escape from the doomed town. They crept out at night along the strands of the river with whatever they could carry. Some of them fell into the hands of the English sentries. From them the English learned the parlous state of the defence. There was a brief moment of excitement when the defenders on the walls saw a column of soldiers approaching from the north through the wheat-fields of Brie. For a few hours they took it for the promised army of relief. All the bells of the town rang out in celebration. But they were shortly silenced. It was in fact John of Luxembourg arriving with reinforcements for the besieging army: several hundred fresh men from Picardy and part of the English garrison of Calais. In the last days of the siege the defenders succeeded in getting a messenger out with an appeal for help to the Dauphin. The Dauphin was very candid. He told them that there was no hope. His forces were not strong enough to intervene. They would have to fend for themselves as best they could. On 17 November 1420 Melun surrendered after a siege of four months.[13]

The resistance of Melun had cost Henry a good part of his army. The total tally of casualties to battle injuries and dysentery came to about 1,700, around a third of his strength. The terms of surrender reflected Henry's vexation. The garrison and inhabitants had to submit to the mercy of Charles VI and his Regent. They were promised their lives, with the exception of any English or Scots found within the walls and anyone suspected of complicity in the murder of John the Fearless. But they were to remain prisoners until they had sworn never to fight for the Dauphin again and had found guarantors to vouch for their good conduct. All armour and weaponry and other movables were to be brought to the citadel and delivered up to the besiegers. A collective fine of 20,000 francs was imposed on the inhabitants. These terms were enforced with a rigour that surprised contemporaries. The English went through the garrison records to identify those who had fought against them. Twenty Scots found among them were summarily hanged for treason to King James. Three squires of the Duke of Orléans were beheaded for complicity in the murder of John the Fearless in spite of their denials. Olivier de Léer, the man who had finished him off by plunging a sword into his belly, was identified in the garrison lists but disappeared. One of Henry's Gascon retainers was later

beheaded in view of the whole army for taking a bribe to help him escape. The rest of the garrison either refused to renounce the Dauphin or were not given the chance. Some 500 or 600 of them were taken in barges to Paris, where they were distributed among the prisons of the city. Some were later admitted to ransom and released. Some were charged with various crimes and tried before the Parlement. At least two of these were executed as traitors. Many died of disease in the cells of the Châtelet while waiting to hear their fate. The captain of Melun, Arnaud-Guilhem de Barbazan, was saved by his status and his chivalrous reputation from summary execution. But he was held in the Bastille for several months while the Parlement examined his case. They tortured him to make him confess to his role in the murder of John the Fearless, in spite of his claim that he had received Henry's personal assurance that he would be honourably treated. And when he was finally acquitted in 1424 he was ordered to be held indefinitely as a prisoner of war at Château-Gaillard. There he remained until the French finally captured the fortress in 1429 and released him.[14]

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The lesson of Melun's fierce resistance was it was likely to take a long time to defeat the Dauphin by military means alone, much longer than Henry V's resources or the patience of his English subjects could be expected to last. The speed with which the Dauphin's officers had taken control of central and southern France and established a viable government there had taken the English by surprise. The rapid collapse of the once powerful Burgundian positions in Languedoc was an even greater shock. To make good his claim to rule all France Henry needed the support of major political figures outside the regions under direct English or Burgundian control, but it was obvious that his cause had very little support south of the Loire. His only potential allies there were the rulers of the semi-autonomous principalities around the edges of Dauphinist France: Brittany, the Bourbonnais and the march of Gascony, whose main priority was to protect their independence against both sides and sell their support for the highest price they could get.

The most vulnerable of the French princes were the prisoners of Agincourt incarcerated in English prisons. Initially held in relatively pleasant conditions in London and Windsor, their situation had markedly deteriorated in 1417, when Henry V left for Normandy and they were moved to remote and comfortless provincial fortresses. They had been in England now for five years, and captivity had broken the morale of most of them. They received

irregular snippets of news from messengers and servants passing to and fro across the Channel, each more depressing than the last. Some of them were being detained indefinitely because of their political importance. Others were in principle allowed to ransom themselves but found it impossible to raise the money in the current state of France. Marshal Boucicaut, who had never been a rich man, offered 60,000 *écus* which he could not afford and was never able to raise. He ultimately died in captivity in 1421. The Count of Vendôme had promised 100,000 old *écus*, but after paying the first instalments he found that devaluation and war damage in France made it impossible to find the rest. By 1420 he was cadging small loans to pay for food and clothing and the cost of burying fellow prisoners who had died in the unhealthy prisons where they were held.[15]

Charles VI's formal adoption of the English King as his heir in the treaty of Troyes presented the prisoners with an acute political dilemma. Were they to defy what was on the face of it their sovereign's will? Or were they to hold out for the cause of the Dauphin, a young man repudiated by his family, whom most of them had last seen as a child in the household of the Duke of Anjou and knew only as a suspected murderer. Shortly after the conclusion of the treaty the Dukes of Orléans and Bourbon were brought from their prisons before the King's council at Westminster and invited to adhere to it. Orléans refused but Bourbon cracked. He had always been the weakest of the prisoners of Agincourt. He had told Henry V as early as 1416 that he might be willing to recognise his claim to the French throne, and three and a half years of incarceration in a succession of Lancastrian fortresses in the Midlands had broken whatever power of resistance he still had. Within a month of the interview Bourbon was on a ship bound for Normandy with a guard of forty soldiers. 'Most high and mighty prince,' he wrote to Henry V,

> … I am now ready and willing to observe the treaty which my lord the King [Charles VI] has made with you, to which treaty I will gladly and loyally swear whenever it may please you … Moreover, fully trusting in your noble person I offer you my towns, castles, possessions, my child and all that God has given me in the hope that you will be my good and true lord and master.

After some weeks in the castle of Torcy outside Dieppe, Bourbon was taken before Henry V at Melun. Here intensive negotiations were opened with the Duke himself and with the representatives of his wife and councillors who administered his appanage in the Bourbonnais. Bourbon ultimately agreed, the following March, to pay 100,000 *écus* in instalments over a year. The agreement provided for him to be released when half of this sum was paid

provided that he could find security for the rest. But the security demanded was exorbitant: seven hostages including his second son, Louis, and eight of the most important strongholds of his domains, victualled and equipped for a year, in addition to the county of Clermont which the Anglo-Burgundians already occupied. The value of the Duke's rent-roll had fallen catastrophically as a result of the devaluation of the coinage and the collapse of land values. With great difficulty he managed to pay 60 per cent of his ransom over the next eighteen months, mainly by borrowing and selling land in south-western France. But he was unable to raise the rest and found it impossible to procure the surrender of the places required as security. At one point the Dauphin offered to pay substantially the whole ransom in the hope of holding on to Bourbon's allegiance. But this would not have been acceptable to the English King, who valued Bourbon's allegiance more than his money. After being moved repeatedly between various prisons in England and France Bourbon remained in captivity in England until his death in 1434.[16]

Henry V had better fortune with the Duke of Brittany's younger brother Arthur Count of Richemont. Richemont was no longer the key to Brittany that he had seemed to be before John V's release from captivity. But he had few firm political attachments and was willing to reach an accommodation with Henry V in spite of the changed situation if it won him his freedom. In September 1420 he sailed under heavy guard from Southampton to France. Henry sent his personal barges to Pontoise to carry him on the last stage of his journey to Melun. The English King did not ask for a ransom from a man who was almost landless. He wanted Richemont's skills as a soldier and his impressive capacity for recruiting men to his service. Richemont seems to have agreed at Melun to supply both, provided that the Duke his brother consented. The Count was entrusted to the Earl of Suffolk and escorted to the fortress of Pontorson in Lower Normandy. There the brothers met for a carefully staged and guarded conference beneath the walls of the fortress on the fortified bridge over the River Couesnon which marked the border of ducal Brittany. John V presumably consented to his brother's deal with Henry V, for Richemont was shortly afterwards released from captivity and retained to fight for the King of England against everyone other than his older brother. A number of Breton soldiers who had served in the Dauphinist garrison of Melun during the siege were released and handed over to him to serve as the germ of a new Breton corps in English service. The King invested him with the important castle and county of Ivry, where he was made responsible for defending a sensitive sector of the southern march of Normandy. John V himself, however, remained elusive. At

Pontorson he was pressed to throw in his lot with the English like his brother. But true to his circumspect attitude over the past decade, he declined to commit himself.[17]

Like the Duke of Brittany, the great feudatories of the Pyrenees and the Gascon march were in a strong position to bargain for advantage. They were militarily powerful and virtually independent. They were also the only powers in a position to mount a serious military challenge to the Dauphin south of the Loire. The Count of Foix, who was by far the strongest of them, had many reasons to make common cause with Henry V. He was still smarting from his peremptory removal from the government of Languedoc by the Dauphin in March 1420. His brother Archambaud lord of Navailles had been murdered alongside John the Fearless on the bridge at Montereau. Shortly after the Dauphin had taken possession of Languedoc the Count had been visited at Orthez by his brother Gaston de Grailly Captal de Buch. Gaston was a firm ally of the English not only in Gascony, where his share of the family's lands was situated, but in Normandy where Henry had recently granted him the county of Longueville. He arrived at Orthez with a report on the current state of negotiations with the courts of Burgundy and Troyes and an offer of the lieutenancy of Languedoc or the office of Constable of France if he preferred. The count, who knew his own value, would not commit himself.

After the treaty of Troyes Gaston de Grailly returned to Orthez to persuade his brother to adhere to the new settlement. He brought with him fresh offers of office and territory. But Jean de Foix wanted more. His ambassadors, who appeared before Henry in the new year, declared that he was prepared to recognise the treaty and to do homage to him for the county of Foix. He was willing to accept appointment as Charles VI's lieutenant in Languedoc. But he wanted large grants of territory as his reward: the county of Bigorre and a string of minor lordships along the northern foothills of the Pyrenees. He also demanded 4,000 francs a month for his salary and expenses. It proved impossible to conclude these promising discussions because of technical problems about the status of Béarn. But for the moment the Count of Foix declared himself to be committed to the principle of an English alliance even if he was not yet in a position to agree to one. He promised that he would shortly mount a major offensive against the Dauphin's positions in Languedoc. His ally Charles II lord of Albret and his cousin François lord of Sainte-Bazeille went further and adhered to the treaty. These were significant defections. Charles of Albret was the son of the Constable of France who had been killed at Agincourt and the pivotal figure on the western march of Gascony. François was one of

the principal lords of the Bazadais. These men were connected by kinship or clientage to most of the nobility of the south-west. Their support opened up the possibility of reversing half a century of humiliation and defeat on the march of English Gascony.[18]

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On 1 December 1420 Henry V made his first entry into Paris as Regent of France. He entered by the Porte Saint-Denis in the late afternoon as darkness was falling, flanked by Charles VI and Philip of Burgundy and followed by the Dukes of Clarence and Bedford at the head of a cavalcade of knights and liveried attendants. The whole length of the Rue Saint-Denis from the gate to the Châtelet was decked out with silks and velvets to welcome him. Tableaux were staged in front of the Palace on the Cité. Groups of priests in copes and surplices stood at intervals along the route singing hymns and holding out the relics of their churches to be kissed by the two kings. It was the best welcome that the diminished and starving population of Paris could manage, but the clerk of the Parlement noticed that the crowds shouting 'Noël!' were thinner than they had been for previous royal entries. After praying with Charles VI before the high altar of Notre-Dame Henry rode with his brothers and a magnificent company to begin a round of stately public celebrations at the Louvre.[19]

By the time of Henry's entry Paris had been occupied by English troops for several months. Worried by the persistent reports of disaffection in the streets and by the truculent attitude of the city's Burgundian captains to the oath of loyalty, the English King had decided to take possession of his capital during the summer. In July 1420 a large body of English soldiers arrived without warning from Melun and occupied the Bastille, expelling its Burgundian garrison. Shortly afterwards English troops took over the Louvre, the Hôtel de Nesle on the left bank and the castle of Vincennes. The Count of Saint-Pol was dismissed as Captain of Paris and temporarily replaced by the Duke of Clarence. In the wake of the soldiers came the officials. They included the English King's councillors Henry Chichele Archbishop of Canterbury and Philip Morgan, now Bishop of Worcester, with their staffs of clerks, lawyers and bureaucrats. The first English merchants, dealing in wine and grain, had already set up in the city within a month of the treaty. The attitude of ordinary Parisians to the foreigners in their midst is not recorded. The tensions of a large and animated city were never far below the surface. But in the autumn of 1420 the Parisians had good reason to think well of the new regime. There were still severe shortages in the city's markets and queues still formed outside bakers' shops

before dawn. But with the capture of Melun the whole course of the Seine had been freed up from the Langres plateau to the sea, making a major breach in the Dauphinist blockade. The enthusiasm which greeted Henry's entry was probably genuine.[20]

On 6 December 1420 the Estates-General opened in the great hall of the Hôtel Saint-Pol. Charles VI sat upon the throne, flanked by Henry V and Philip of Burgundy. Nominally the assembly spoke for all France. In fact, as all could see, it represented only the Burgundian provinces of the north, essentially Picardy, Champagne, the Île de France and Paris. The opening address was delivered by Jean Le Clerc, an aged and colourless nonentity from the judicial section of Charles VI's household who had recently been appointed Chancellor of France. 'A voice of wailing is heard out of Zion,' he began, taking his theme from one of the most dismal chapters of the Book of Jeremiah. The Chancellor reminded his audience of the events which had led to the treaty of Troyes and of the successful start which had been made on the conquest of the Dauphinist garrisons around Paris. It was only the first stage of a campaign which would ultimately reunite France, restore peace and prosperity to every part of the realm and avenge the death of John the Fearless. He called on them to ratify the treaty and to grant the King the means of finishing the war. When he had finished the English King's brothers and the Burgundian noblemen seated around the throne rose from their seats to shout out their approval. The rest of the gathering withdrew to deliberate. After four days they returned to pronounce the treaty to be 'laudable, necessary and in the public interest' and called for everyone to be required to swear the oath to uphold it. Charles VI rose from the throne and stood bareheaded while his spokesman pronounced the perpetual disinheritance of the man who 'called himself Dauphin' and declared the treaty to represent his own will and that of the whole nation.

The next week was devoted to the sensitive question of finance. On 19 December the Estates agreed to restore a modified version of the *aides*. A tax of 25 per cent was imposed for a period of a year on wine sold retail and 5 per cent on cloth. At the same time another more controversial tax was authorised. The competitive devaluation of the silver coinage by the two sides in the civil war had provoked much ill-feeling. The silver *gros* had fallen to less than 20 per cent of its value since May 1417. The Regent's government promised to reinstate the silver coinage at values last minted in 1413. In return they were to be allowed to levy a forced loan in silver to fund the new coinage. Every community was to be assessed for a given quantity of silver in coin or bullion and required to surrender it to the agents of the mints. In theory the silver was to be repaid in the

new coin at par, the government taking no more than a commission of 12½ per cent. In fact the 'loan' was never repaid and it is far from clear that the government ever intended to repay it. It was in reality, as the Dauphinists were quick to point out, a particularly heavy *taille*.

The final chapter of the Estates-General occurred on 23 December with an important piece of political theatre. Eight men, all absent, were formally indicted for the murder of John the Fearless: the 'self-styled Dauphin', Jean Louvet, Tanneguy du Châtel, Arnaud-Guilhem de Barbazan, the Viscount of Narbonne, Guillaume Bataille, Robert de Lairé and Olivier de Léer. The prosecution case was presented in much detail by Nicholas Rolin. In due course the Dauphin would be formally summoned to answer the charges before the criminal chamber of the Parlement, his name called out by the cryer from the marble steps in the courtyard of the Palace on the Cité. After the prescribed number of citations, judgment in default was finally given against him early in January. He was sentenced to be banished from France and declared ineligible to succeed to any lands or offices whatever.[21]

At the conclusion of the assembly Henry V announced his intention of returning for a short time to England where, he said, his presence was urgently required. Arrangements were made for the government of France in his absence. The Duke of Clarence was nominated as his lieutenant throughout the realm and was granted the grand mansion built forty years before by the Constable de Clisson to live in when he came to Paris. The city was left firmly in the grip of Henry's officers. His uncle and confidant Thomas Beaufort Duke of Exeter became captain of Paris with a garrison of 500 men. He appears to have been based in the Louvre. The Earl of Huntingdon maintained a separate garrison at Vincennes. Sir John Fastolf, the efficient former captain of Harfleur, was put in command of the Bastille with a Frenchman as his deputy and a garrison which included eighty English soldiers. The Earl of Salisbury, perhaps the ablest soldier in Henry's service, was reappointed as lieutenant in the strategically sensitive regions of Alençon and the march of Maine. The other institutions of the French state were tightly controlled by partisans of the Duke of Burgundy. The Provost of Paris, the Provost of the Merchants and the four *échevins* were all replaced by his nominees. Lourdin de Saligny, one of Philip's councillors who had served as Charles VI's first chamberlain since 1419, presided over the royal household and served as Philip's political factotum in Paris. These transactions completed, the English King and his brothers retired to celebrate Christmas in noisy splendour in the Louvre, surrounded by flatterers

and opportunists, while the Duke of Burgundy gave his own banquet in the Hôtel de Bourgogne. At the other end of the city the King and Queen had returned to the deserted courtyards of the Hôtel Saint-Pol. They celebrated the feast in the half-empty hall, watched by a thin crowd of gawpers at the back. After Christmas Henry left for Normandy with his wife and brothers and a crowd of officials, councillors and soldiers. The Duke of Burgundy left shortly after him for Flanders. After a month of unaccustomed gaiety the lights went out and silence returned to the palaces and princely mansions of the capital.[22]

On New Year's Eve 1420 Henry V and his wife and brothers entered Rouen where they celebrated the feast of the Epiphany with the same lavish show. The Estates of Normandy assembled before him in the hall of Rouen castle in the middle of January 1421. Normandy had not been represented in the Estates-General in order to preserve the principle that Henry governed it in his own right and not as Regent for Charles VI. But the business was exactly the same as that of the larger assembly. A similar coinage reform was approved, although the Norman coins, minted at Rouen, Caen and Saint-Lô, were issued in Henry's own name with the legend 'H : REX : ANGL : HERES : FRANC' ('Henry King of England, Heir of France'). This was funded in the same way as in the rest of northern France by a forced 'loan' of silver. Henry also demanded a heavy *taille* of 600,000 *livres* in spite of his earlier promises to abandon the onerous fiscal policies of the French monarchy. It was a steep demand to make of a province badly affected by war damage and brigandage. The Estates bargained the King down to 400,000 *livres* in instalments, roughly the equivalent to £60,000 sterling, or rather more than an English lay and clerical subsidy.[23]

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On 1 February 1421 Henry V landed at Dover, the first time that he had set foot in England for three and a half years. He was received, according to a Burgundian chronicler, 'like an angel of God'. Large crowds gathered to cheer him at Dover, Canterbury and Blackheath before his formal entry into London on 14 February. Yet these public exhibitions of joy masked a palpable unease in England. Parliament had met in Westminster Hall on 2 December 1420 to approve the treaty of Troyes, expecting to find the King present. But he had been delayed by the prolonged resistance of Melun and the lengthy deliberations of the Estates-General in Paris. So it was the Keeper of the Realm, Humphrey Duke of Gloucester, who presided from the throne. Chancellor Langley had opened the proceedings with a eulogy of Henry, the 'bringer of unity and peace'.

The Commons were sceptical and fractious. Most unusually there was a contested election for Speaker and the official candidate only just scraped through. There were complaints about the King's prolonged absence and the diversion of petitions to the Council or to Henry in France. There were misgivings about Henry's new status. Technically, he was fighting as Regent of France to suppress a rebellion against the authority of Charles VI. What did that have to do with England? 'I fear, Alas, that the manpower and money of the realm will be miserably wasted on this enterprise,' wrote the choleric Welsh clergyman Adam of Usk. The Commons were worried that England would gradually become an appendage of the much larger and richer kingdom of France. Their predecessors, they observed, had raised this issue with his grandfather Edward III as early as 1340 and a statute had been passed to protect the autonomy of England. Henry was now the ruler of France. He and his successors would eventually reign in France for ever. He had changed his royal style to call himself 'King of England and Heir of France'. Even his English coins bore the new title. They called upon Henry to ordain that

> by no ordinance that our lord the King had made or which he and his heirs and successors might hereafter make as heir and regent of the kingdom of France or as King of France, shall the kingdom of England or its people of whatever status or condition be subjected to or owe obedience to him or his heirs and successors as heir regent or King of France … but they shall be wholly free and quit of the aforesaid subjection and obedience.

The Keeper promised that the statute of Edward III would be respected. From Paris the King tried to contain the Commons' anger. He sent Archbishop Chichele before them with a promise that there would be no demand for taxation in this Parliament. Very little of this was allowed to disturb the placid tone of the official record. But the 'grumbling and griping' were faithfully reported to Henry in Paris.[24]

Henry's main task in England was to manage public opinion at a time of change and anxiety. He needed to recreate something of the patriotic fervour which had followed the battle of Agincourt, to win support for the treaty from a sceptical public and to prepare men for further heavy taxes to fund what he hoped would be a final push against the Kingdom of Bourges. For most Englishmen the King's young bride was the most visible, and perhaps the most popular trophy of the treaty. When she made her own entry into London on 21 February she was received with a pageant almost as impressive as the one that had greeted Henry after Agincourt. Her procession made its way slowly through dense crowds of cheering Londoners in streets filled with choirs, theatrical tableaux, mechanical monsters

and ‘all maner of lowde mynstrelsie’. Two days later she was crowned Queen in Westminster Abbey by the Archbishop of Canterbury. When the feasting was over Henry V summoned Parliament to meet at Westminster on 2 May and then set out on a two-month tour of England, accompanied for part of the time by Catherine. The King visited Bristol, the Welsh march, the Midlands and Yorkshire, showing himself to his subjects and acting as convention expected of a King. He bore himself royally. He worshipped at the celebrated shrines on his route. He distributed alms with a generous hand. He received petitions. According to the Burgundian chronicler Enguerrand de Monstrelet he spoke in all the major towns about his deeds in France, his travails in the cause of war and peace and the task ahead. To achieve his goal and bring a definitive peace, he told them, ‘two things were needed, money and men-at-arms’. The demands of the French war were about to become even more pressing. On about 6 April 1421 Henry was met by a messenger on the road to York with the news that the English had suffered a serious defeat in France at the hands of the Earl of Buchan’s Scottish army. His brother the Duke of Clarence had been killed and a large part of his army had been lost.[25]

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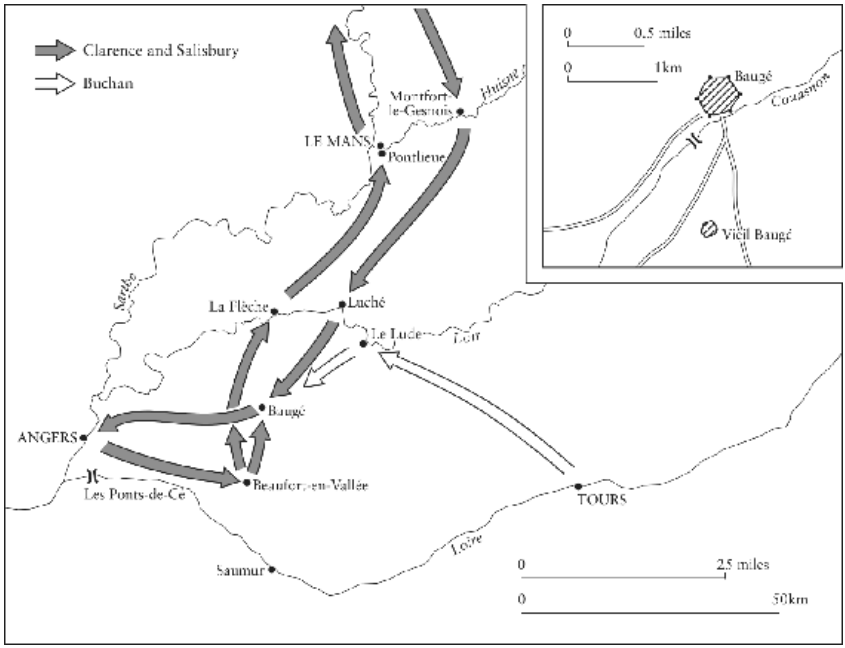
On 25 January 1421 the Dauphin had presided over a great council at Selles on the Cher in western Berry. It was really an enlarged council of war attended by prominent noblemen from the provinces under his control in order to decide upon a strategy for confronting the English. Very little is known about its deliberations. The surviving fragments of information show that they were dissatisfied with the conduct of the war to date. They expressed doubts about the quality of the advice that the Dauphin was receiving. They thought that his council, which was still dominated by professional administrators and soldiers of modest rank, should be reinforced by some ‘distinguished noblemen’. Yet the main decisions to emerge from the council of Selles amounted to an endorsement of plans that the Dauphin and his council had already made in response to the depressing experiences of the previous year. The Dauphin’s Scottish mercenaries had been reorganised during the autumn as the ‘Army of Scotland’, an autonomous force with its own administration, its own officers and its own structure of command, which henceforth would fight together as a single unit instead of being distributed in penny packets across the whole area of operations. It was in future to be deployed as the Dauphinists’ main strike force. The decision marked an important shift in French tactical thinking, which had for many years been against engaging the English in battle, preferring

to fight a war of attrition from large, strategically sited garrisons. This attitude had been entrenched by their lack of an effective archery arm and by their experience at Agincourt. But it was never shared by the Scots, whose leaders were probably behind the new tactics. They were well supplied with archers and willing to take greater risks. The Dauphin's council appears to have envisaged major field operations in the summer, when the 'new army of Scotland' was expected to reach France with as many as 6,000–8,000 reinforcements under the command of the Earls of Douglas and Mar. In addition the council proposed to recruit an army of 2,000 men-at-arms and 1,000 bowmen in Languedoc to operate under the command of the Viscount of Narbonne. These ambitious plans made it necessary to reorder the Dauphin's finances in order to pay for them. The Council of Selles advised the Dauphin to summon the Estates-General to vote the heavy taxes that would be required to support an army on this scale. The Estates were ordered to convene at Clermont in Auvergne in May.[26]

In fact the Scots' opportunity to prove themselves came earlier than expected. The Duke of Clarence, who had been left in command in Henry V's absence, was hungry for glory. He had for years felt overshadowed by his elder brother and deprived of the recognition and riches that he considered his due. Shortly after the council of Selles had dispersed Clarence launched a powerful *chevauchée* into Anjou. The importance attached to the venture is indicated by the distinguished company which took part. It included the Earls of Salisbury and Huntingdon, John lord Roos captain of Mantes and Château-Gaillard, the Northumberland knight Sir John Grey of Heton who had recently been made Count of Tancarville, the King's councillor and companion Sir Gilbert Umfraville, and Clarence's seventeen-year-old stepson John Beaufort Earl of Somerset with his younger brother Edmund. They appear to have had some 4,000 or 5,000 mounted men with them, nearly half the English strength in France. Sweeping past Le Mans, the English army had found unguarded crossings of the Huisne and Loir rivers and advanced south. They seem to have hoped to surprise the city of Angers and possibly to capture the important fortified bridges over the Loire at Ponts-de-Cé.



14 The Baugé campaign, March 1421

The Dauphin was at Poitiers with the Scottish captains when the news of Clarence's advance reached him. Buchan seized his chance. The Army of Scotland was cantoned nearby in Touraine. He gathered his men and marched north to cut off Clarence's retreat. Buchan's Scots were accompanied by a smaller French force commanded by Gilbert de Lafayette, a well-known figure who had already made a name for himself as the defender of Falaise and Lyon. They were joined on their way by fresh recruits raised locally in Anjou and Maine including the celebrated *routier* captain La Hire. In all, there must have been between 4,000 and 5,000 Scots and about 1,000 French troops.

On 21 March 1421 the Dauphinist army reached the River Loir at Le Lude. Here they learned that Clarence had withdrawn from Angers, which he had found too well walled and manned, and had reached Beaufort-en-Vallée, apparently heading east towards Tours. Buchan left Le Lude and advanced towards them. Late that evening he encamped outside Baugé, a small walled town some ten miles north-east of Beaufort. Clarence, whose scouting appears to have been seriously defective, was entirely unaware of their presence until the following day, 22 March, when four Scottish soldiers were captured close to the English camp and brought in to be interrogated. At the time much of the English army, including almost all the archers, had scattered in different directions on foraging expeditions. But Clarence, who had always been a rash

commander, decided that surprise was worth more than numbers. He resolved to attack the enemy at once with only the men that he had at hand. They included almost all the men-at-arms but none of the archers except for those who belonged to his personal bodyguard. The Earl of Huntingdon and Sir Gilbert Umfraville, both experienced veterans, were aghast. 'My lorde ye have no menne with the enemyes thus hastely to fyght,' they said. The enemy's strength was unknown. There had been no time to reconnoitre their position. Umfraville thought that he should collect his forces and agree a battle plan with his men before moving. But Clarence 'wold not be gouerned' and brushed their misgivings aside. Umfraville had already won glory in the King's eyes, he is reported to have answered, and he was not going to be denied his. So, leaving the Earl of Salisbury behind to gather the rest of the army, Clarence rode off at speed towards Baugé with barely a third of his force, hoping to catch the Scots unawares. A few miles short of Baugé his cavalcade was seen by a French scouting party. But by the time the scouts got back to raise the alarm the English had already reached the bridge over the River Couasnon a short distance west of Baugé. It was late afternoon. Clarence had about 1,500 men with him. Several hundred more were still spread out along the road behind, struggling to keep up.

The main body of Buchan's army was encamped on the opposite side of the river about half a mile south of the bridge by a hamlet known as Vieil Baugé. About 120 Scottish archers had been left to guard the bridge. They were playing football when the English banners suddenly appeared on the opposite bank. They grabbed their weapons and rushed to block the crossing. The English dismounted and forced their way across in the face of a murderous hail of arrows. Remounting, they dispersed a troop of French horsemen who came up too late to stop them and pursued them to a nearby church where the French took refuge in the tower. A certain amount of time was lost while the English tried to assault the fugitives in the tower. Then, abandoning that idea, they resolved to attack the main enemy encampment at Vieil Baugé. By this time, however, Buchan had been alerted to the danger and had been able to gather most of his own men and array them in battle order by a cemetery on the northern side of the hamlet.

At about six o'clock in the evening the Duke of Clarence, prominent at the head of his men, his basinet surmounted by a coronet glittering with jewels, made straight for their lines in the failing evening light. Both sides charged. Then they dismounted and fought a fierce hand-to-hand battle on foot around the cemetery. Without archers or prepared defensive positions the English had

none of the tactical advantages which had traditionally won their battles. The outcome turned on brute force, a contest which the English, outnumbered three to one, could not win. Clarence himself was one of the first to be killed. Roos was cut down while trying to save him. Umfraville and Grey died in the thick of the fighting. The rest, demoralised by the loss of their charismatic leader, broke and fled. As always in medieval battles most of the casualties were suffered by the defeated side in the pursuit, which continued until nightfall. The most reliable estimate, based on a body count carried out afterwards with the help of two English heralds, is that two-thirds of Clarence's army, 1,054 men, had perished. Almost all the survivors were captured including the Earl of Huntingdon and the King's two Beaufort cousins.

The following morning was Easter Sunday. A group of English soldiers from Beaufort-en-Vallée, led by Clarence's bastard son, stumbled upon the battlefield and found the dead still lying where they had fallen. The field was deserted except for a few pillagers. Clarence's body had just been pulled out from among the dead and was being loaded onto a cart. The English drove off the pillagers, retrieved the body and fled. The rest of the English army at Beaufort, some 3,000 men, had already set out at dawn for Normandy. They had a difficult and dangerous march ahead of them. A superior enemy flushed with victory blocked their escape to the east. The Loir, Sarthe and Huisnes rivers in full flood lay ahead of them to the north. They owed their survival to the boldness and skill of the Earl of Salisbury. His men succeeded in crossing the Loir at La Flèche over an improvised bridge made out of carts and doors taken from nearby buildings. Meanwhile the Scots crossed the river fifteen miles upstream at Le Lude and set out in pursuit. Salisbury now made for Le Mans. The only practicable escape route was by the old stone bridge over the River Huisnes at Pontlieue, two miles south of the city walls. The bridge was unfortified, but the carriageway had been broken by the French and the north bank was defended by about a hundred men from Le Mans. Salisbury sent forward a company wearing the white uniform crosses of the French. Pretending to be the harbingers of the Dauphin's army they persuaded the defenders to replace the timber beams and planks which had been stacked by the riverbank. Then they crossed the river, slaughtered the wretched townsmen and, once the whole force was over, destroyed the bridge behind them as the Scottish vanguard approached. A day or two later the remnants of the broken English army reached Normandy.

Writing their despatch to the Dauphin at midnight on the night of the battle, Buchan and Wigton urged him to come at once to

Anjou and invade Normandy while the enemy was in disarray. 'With God's help all will be yours,' they wrote. The Dauphin was overjoyed. He had copies of the commanders' victory despatch distributed throughout the provinces of his obedience. The news brought men out onto the streets to mark the occasion with processions and public displays of elation. He came personally to meet the Scots at Tours. A lavish banquet was given in their honour, attended according to the time-honoured tradition by the principal English prisoners. The Earl of Buchan was appointed to the office of Constable of France, which had been vacant (on the Dauphin's side) since the death of the Count of Armagnac. Lafayette became a Marshal. For many humbler soldiers of the Army of Scotland the victory brought sudden riches that must have done much to efface the memory of the hardships and unpaid wages of the past year. The spoil taken from the dead, mainly armour and horses, was considerable, and the tally of prisoners even higher. The highlander who prised the Duke of Clarence's jewelled coronet from his helmet sold it for 1,000 nobles (£333) to John Stewart of Darnley and he pledged it for five times as much. The captor of the Earl of Somerset sold him to the Dauphin for 40,000 *écus*.[27]

In England the response to the battle of Baugé was panic, followed by complaisance as the facts became known and the defeat was dismissed as a temporary setback, the result as everyone agreed of the Duke of Clarence's moment of folly. In one sense they were right. It had been an unnecessary battle and its immediate military consequences were slight and brief. The French failed to follow up their victory in spite of Buchan's urging. The English lost no territory and shortly recovered the strategic initiative. But the political consequences were incalculable. It was the first time that an English army had been defeated in a major battle in eighty years of war. It destroyed the myth of invincibility which had been their chief political asset since 1415.

The immediate effect was to loosen French purse-strings, very much as Agincourt had loosened English ones. On 12 May 1421 the Estates-General of Dauphinist France opened in the bishop's palace at Clermont in Auvergne with an address by the Dauphin's commissioner the Archbishop of Bourges. He dwelt on the significance of the battle and hinted that a definitive victory was close. He pointed to the great task that lay before the Dauphin if he was to expel the English and rescue his father from the Anglo-Burgundians in Paris. He called for the reinstatement of the *aides*, although he stopped short of suggesting that they should be permanent, as they had been before 1417. Finally he asked for an immediate grant of 1,200,000 *livres*. The delegates, who believed

that the English dominion in Normandy was on the verge of collapse, jibbed at the amount. But they declared that they would always be willing to give the Dauphin the resources that he really needed and more if needs be. For the moment he would have to be content with 800,000 *livres*. Even that was a very substantial grant, equal to the largest *tailles* that had been imposed before the collapse of the French tax system, and they had been spread across the whole of France.[28]

The main impact of the battle of Beaugé was on political loyalties, as trimmers across northern and western France began to recalculate the odds. John of Brittany, the arch-trimmer, had been weighing up the case for an accommodation with Henry V for several months. He now swung rapidly the other way. In early May 1421 he and his brother Richard met the Dauphin and the Earl of Buchan at the Duke of Anjou's imposing fortress at Sablé on the Sarthe. The festivities extended over several days as the two brothers-in-law exchanged tokens of insincere affection. The conference concluded with a treaty. The Duke promised to renounce all his agreements with the English, although privately he had no intention of breaking with them altogether. The Dauphin promised in a secret codicil to dismiss the councillors who had advised him to support the revolt of the house of Penthièvre, something which he did not do and never intended to do. But the treaty marked a real accession of military strength to the Dauphin's cause. Charles was promised the services of a 2,000-strong Breton corps, and in the event the numbers provided were even greater. The Duke's brother Richard de Montfort was made Count of Étampes and designated as their captain.[29]

John V proved to be a reliable weathervane of changing political sentiment. Several prominent Burgundians with misgiving about the treaty of Troyes now took the opportunity to defect to the Dauphin. The most significant of them was Jacques d'Harcourt, the Burgundian captain of the coastal fortress of Le Crotoy in Picardy. He had been Philip of Burgundy's friend and councillor for years. But he had never cared for the English, who had seized his wife's county of Tancarville in Normandy and granted it to Sir John Grey of Heton. Under the terms of the treaty of Troyes not even loyal Burgundian stalwarts would recover their confiscated domains in Normandy. Harcourt had never adhered to it. After months of covert hostility to the Anglo-Burgundian cause he switched sides after Baugé and openly declared for the Dauphin. Shortly he found allies among other Dauphinist sympathisers in Ponthieu and Picardy, many of whom like Harcourt himself had counted themselves as friends of the house of Burgundy before the treaty of

Troyes. Together the confederates seized Noyellessur-Mer, Saint-Valéry and several other places, creating a dangerous enclave at the mouth of the Somme and giving the Dauphinists a second outlet to the sea in addition to La Rochelle. From here they were able to prey on English shipping in the Channel, launch damaging mounted raids into Normandy and Picardy and perhaps even receive reinforcements from Castile or Scotland.[30]

Defections like these invited others. From Dijon the dowager Duchess of Burgundy urged her son to summon all the troops that he could raise to stabilise the position before it got out of control. In Rouen and Paris the English captains were nervous. Traitors admitted the Dauphinists into the fortified enclosure of Bec abbey, from which they were with difficulty expelled by troops from nearby English garrisons. There were murmurs of rebellion in Rouen. Several citizens were arrested and at least one was executed for treason. In Paris there were ugly rumours of treachery. Several prominent men were put under house arrest. The popular Burgundian Marshal Jean Villiers of L'Isle-Adam was accused, probably wrongly, of organising a plot to admit the Dauphin's troops to the capital and was arrested on the orders of the Duke of Exeter. A large mob appeared in no time as they led him away to the Bastille. Several hundred English troops were required to restore order. Exeter, feeling unsafe in the Louvre, moved his quarters to the Bastille.[31]

Not the least effect of Buchan's victory, although it proved to be short-lived, was that it induced the Dauphin to put aside his distaste for campaigning and take the field in person. He ordered a splendid sword and a new set of armour including arm-pieces 'of the Scottish kind', and re-equipped his household troops. His presence with the army was a considerable boost to recruitment. After the conference with the Bretons at Sablé Charles marched directly against the English at the head of about 6,000 men including the whole of the Scottish corps. He established his headquarters at Le Mans while his army went forward to besiege the important English garrison at Alençon. The Dauphin's councillors believed that the garrison had been so weakened by the withdrawal of men for Clarence's army that it could be culled without difficulty.

They had missed their chance. More than six weeks had been allowed to pass since the Scottish earls had urged him to invade Normandy at once. In the interval the English had recovered their balance. The main burden of crisis management fell on the Earl of Salisbury. He stabilised the position in the Norman towns, reorganised the garrisons of the march, appointed new commanders in place of the men who had been lost and put heart into the

English by a series of bold moves on the ground. Salisbury grasped the fact that the main problem was not so much military as psychological. He had to halt the defections by showing that the English were still the dominant military power. So he formed a mounted raiding force with what men could be spared from garrison service and marched south towards Alençon. A bold but unsuccessful attempt was made to raise the Dauphin's siege. The two armies came within a cannon's shot beneath the walls of the town. But the English were heavily outnumbered and forced to withdraw, fighting a series of rearguard actions in which they suffered heavy casualties. Salisbury then turned south and conducted a destructive *chevauchée* into Maine and Anjou, penetrating down the valley of the Mayenne as far as Château-Gontier in order to cut the Dauphin's supply lines from the Loire. In the last week of May the Dauphin was forced to abandon the siege of Alençon. By the beginning of June the general feeling was that the worst was over. 'Your land, blessed be God, at the writinge of this it stod in good plit and nevre so well as now,' Salisbury wrote exultantly to the King; 'for thanked be God your liege peple here dredded nevre lesse your enemye thanne they do at this day, and all the capteines here do wel their diligence as wel in the keping of their places as in stiring and anoying of your enemies.'[32]

After the debacle of Alençon the Dauphin's commanders changed their strategy. Instead of confronting the tough and well-prepared English garrisons of the Norman march they turned east and invaded the great plain of the Beauce, where supplies were easier to come by and resistance was expected to be weaker. The Dauphin's army was heavily reinforced. The Vicomte of Narbonne arrived from the Loire with about 3,000 men. Richard de Montfort appeared with 2,000 Bretons and the promise of more. Altogether the Dauphin must by now have had about 10,000 men under his command. The *taille* voted at Clermont filled his coffers over the summer and briefly allowed him to deploy by far the largest field army which he had assembled since his assumption of the regency two and a half years before. The Beauce was wide open. It had been a backwater for years. Its defenders were completely unprepared for the onslaught. Most of them were Burgundians, and some did not have their heart in it. When Montmirail at the western edge of the region surrendered after a siege of a fortnight its Burgundian captains promptly joined the Dauphin. None of the castles in the Dauphin's path put up more than a nominal resistance. In the middle of June, the whole host advanced on Chartres, the principal city of the region.[33]

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Henry V received the news of the battle of Baugé with the iron self-control for which he was famous. He continued on his way to York, waiting a whole day before sharing it with his companions. There on 7 April 1421 he met his council to consider what to do. It was decided that the King should return to Normandy as soon as possible with a new army. The beginning of June was thought to be the earliest feasible date. In the meantime orders were sent out to recruit 4,000 or 5,000 troops and find transports to carry them to Calais. They were immediately confronted with the problem of finance. The only source from which the costs of the new expedition could be met was the King's English revenues. The Commons, who were due to meet at Westminster in three weeks' time, would have to be asked for a fresh tax. It was by no means clear, in the light of their attitude in December, that they would grant one, and in any event it would take some time to come in. With advances due to be paid to the soldiers and seamen at the ports, Henry would have to borrow heavily. Commissioners were appointed in every county to interview men of substance and extract loans from them. The funds were to be brought to Westminster and delivered to the King by 8 May.

After several years in which the English had shown themselves increasingly cool towards the King's repeated demands for money and men, the results were remarkable. By the beginning of May Henry's officials had obtained commitments from the nobility to furnish at least 900 men-at-arms and 3,300 archers, more than three times what his brother the Duke of Bedford had been able to recruit the year before. The forced loan was the most successful exercise of its kind in the whole of the fifteenth century. Henry's commissioners succeeded in raising nearly £37,000 from 572 lenders, roughly the equivalent of a Parliamentary subsidy. But these impressive figures concealed notable variations. The bishops, true to their royalist tradition, contributed more than half of the sum raised, while the towns were tardy and mean. No less than £14,000 came from one man, Henry V's uncle Bishop Beaufort of Winchester, in addition to some £8,300 still outstanding from his previous loans and a further 5,500 marks (£3,666) which he was called upon to find at the last moment when the money ran out at the ports. The results were a tribute to Henry V's political skills and the potent impact of his presence. But they also testified to his ruthlessness when cornered. The loan commissioners had orders to submit a list of those who had refused to lend to the King for his personal attention. In the counties men were afraid of his anger. Even Bishop Beaufort was

effectively blackmailed. He had been under a cloud for the past three years because he was thought to have made use of his status as Henry's representative at the Council of Constance to obtain a cardinal's hat for himself. He had also accepted appointment as the new Pope's legate in England, an unwise decision which put him on both sides of the government's difficult relations with the papacy. The loans were the price of his restoration to his nephew's favour.[34]

Parliament, which met at Westminster on 2 May 1421, proved to be a more accurate test of opinion among the English political classes. On the first day the treaty of Troyes was read out, its terms explained and the whole instrument ratified by both houses. Negotiations about money took up most of the next three weeks. They are ill-recorded. The King appears to have asked for a subsidy. He produced a statement of his English revenues and expenses to demonstrate that he could not do without one. But none was granted. The Commons stuck to their previous line that what Henry did as Regent of France should not be funded from English tax revenues. The clergy, meeting shortly afterwards in St Paul's, granted a tenth. Otherwise the King had to make do with an assurance that he would have a subsidy in the next Parliament if he really needed it. This outcome was extremely embarrassing. The more important of the King's creditors, including Bishop Beaufort, had received assignments on the customs. But the King had counted on the subsidy to repay the heavy borrowings that his commissioners had extracted from less favoured lenders. Some of them had almost certainly received promises of assignments from the collectors which proved impossible to honour.[35]

Looking ahead, the financial future was bleak. The financial statements put before the Commons showed that the defence of Calais and the Scottish borders was consuming two-thirds of the King's revenues, leaving a large deficit on the ordinary operations of government. Large payments to Henry's war treasurers in France had been sustained only by diverting money required for essential expenditure in England and by dishonouring debts. The customs had been depressed by a trade slump for the past year, and most of the yield was committed to the cost of the Calais garrison and the repayment of Bishop Beaufort's loans. After six years of almost continuous fighting, during which insistent financial problems had been repeatedly pushed aside, the strain was showing. Many of Henry IV's household debts and Henry's own debts as Prince of Wales were still outstanding. War wages were still owing for the Agincourt campaign. Several of the captains serving in France had not been paid for their companies for years. The Earl of Suffolk was owed nearly £2,500 in back wages dating back to 1417. At the time

of his capture at Baugé the Earl of Huntingdon was owed more than £8,000 in back wages and £1,000 in prize money. The arrears of the Calais garrison had risen to £28,710.[36]

The gradual drying up of the stream of money from England increasingly cast the burden of the war on the taxpayers of northern France, who were in no position to bear it. In broad terms Henry V's French revenues paid for the garrisons of Normandy and Paris but contributed very little to the cost of field operations. The account of the King's war treasurer, Sir William Philip, which covers field operations under Henry's command in the last year of his life, suggests that two-thirds of their cost was still being funded from his English revenues, less than a fifth from his French revenues and the rest from windfall receipts such as ransoms. The contribution from French revenues was almost all derived from Normandy. Yet Henry's Norman revenues were well below expectations. The *taille* of 400,000 *livres* granted by the Norman Estates in January proved difficult to collect in a province suffering from war damage, brigandage and large-scale migration. The instalments had to be stretched out over a period of two years. Only two-thirds of the grant (about £40,000) was ever collected.[37]

Henry's receipts from the rest of France are impossible to compute for want of surviving records, but the position is likely to have been worse. When Henry's officials had taken control of the French royal treasury the previous July they had been confronted by a picture of financial and administrative chaos. Responsibility was irrationally distributed between a variety of officials and government offices. Devaluation had caused havoc with both receipts and expenditure and made accounting impossible. The tax administration had collapsed everywhere. Receipts had sunk to historic lows. The revenues of the mints, which had been the mainstay of the public finances for the past three years, had collapsed.

Finance was one area of French internal administration in which Henry V was determined to impose his will. At a meeting in August 1420 in the castle of Corbeil during the siege of Melun, which was attended by the English King, the Duke of Burgundy and their allies, Charles VI's council reorganised the mints of northern France. A month later Henry pushed through the council a series of brutal reforms designed to bring some order to the accounting departments and the administration of the *aides*. The two *généraux des finances* who had not already gone were summarily dismissed together with a number of subordinate officials. The financial bureaucracy was drastically reduced. The innumerable assignments in favour of third parties were cancelled and new ones forbidden.

The records were simplified. But these measures are unlikely to have borne much fruit by 1421. Moreover they did nothing to attack the main problems, which were the failure of royal authority, the disintegration of the King's administration and the disruption of communications between Paris and the provinces. As a result, the Anglo-Burgundian government remained heavily dependent on coinage operations in the first months of its existence. In August 1420 Henry had succeeded in farming out the mints to a syndicate of Parisian money-changers for six months for 500,000 *livres*. But in the following year coinage revenues collapsed. The recoinage, which had been expected to restore sound money and raise large sums for the treasury, was an embarrassing failure. The receipts from the silver levy were disappointing and slow to come in. The few silver coins that were minted promptly disappeared from circulation in favour of the devalued products of the Kingdom of Bourges. The whole exercise was frustrated by the inexorable rise of the market price of silver. In August 1421 it was abandoned.[38]

*

The English Parliament was dissolved on 23 May 1421. The brief remainder of Henry's time in England was devoted to the task of trying to detach the Scots from the Dauphin and stopping the 'new army of Scotland' which was due to cross the sea with the Earls of Douglas and Mar in the summer. Henry had been accompanied on his return to England by Gilles de Clamecy, a member of the tight circle of French officials working in the English administration in Paris. Clamecy had been designated as the leader of a joint embassy to Scotland on behalf of Charles VI and King James. Their instructions were to call on the Scottish Governor to disown the Scottish army in France and to stop the recruitment of a new one. The ambassadors set out from London at the beginning of March 1421, accompanied by James's chaplain Dougal Drummond.

It was a difficult moment for the Scots. The Duke of Albany had died at a great age the previous September and had been succeeded as Governor by his weak and mediocre son Murdoch Stewart. Under Murdoch's government Scotland was destined to sink further into lawlessness and anarchy, leaving the north to be controlled in his own interest by the Earl of Mar and the Lowlands by the Earl of Douglas. The arrival of Clamecy's embassy forced Murdoch Stewart to confront the uncomfortable dilemmas posed by the treaty of Troyes. With which France was Scotland allied? The France of its King, or the France of his son? Murdoch summoned a general council. On their advice the Governor opened negotiations with James in England, using Dougal Drummond as an intermediary. But

the negotiations were stillborn. The news of the battle of Baugé probably put paid to whatever prospect of success they had ever had.[39]

Henry V had failed to win over the Scottish political community. But he succeeded better with the Earl of Douglas, the biggest figure in Scottish politics and its dominant military leader. Douglas did not accept the outcome of the general council. He had got on well enough with the Duke of Albany, but he had no time for his successor and strongly resented the transparent attempts of the Albany Stewarts to supplant the senior Stewart line on the Scottish throne. He believed that his own ambitions would be better served by the return of the King. He appears to have come to some kind of understanding with James about the future shape of the government of Scotland and had begun to work actively for the captive King's release.

Henry V skilfully exploited the divisions of the Scots. He declared himself to be willing to release King James, but only if Douglas abandoned the Dauphin. In April 1421 Douglas announced his intention of going to England. By the end of May he was in London. There he entered into a complex tripartite deal with Henry and James. The Scottish King had already committed himself to accompanying the English King on his return to France. Henry V now agreed to allow him to return to Scotland on parole within three months of the end of the campaign, provided that he could induce twenty named magnates of Scotland to surrender as hostages for his return. In return James 'ordered' Douglas to serve Henry in arms, and Douglas entered into an indenture promising to fight for him in France from Easter 1422 with a company of 400 mounted men. It is hardly conceivable that Douglas really intended to fight with the English against Buchan's army, which included his eldest son the Earl of Wigton and a large part of his military following from the Lowlands. The calculation was that, faced with an alliance of Henry, James and Douglas, Buchan's army would withdraw from the Dauphin's service.[40]

In fact the Scots did not withdraw. For Buchan himself this was a straightforward choice. As Murdoch Stewart's younger brother he had little future in Scotland and none at all if James Stewart ever returned there. He was better off as a soldier of fortune in France. The Dauphin eased his choice by granting him the splendid domain of Châtillon-sur-Indre. The other Scottish leaders, who intended eventually to go home, faced a more painful dilemma. But the Dauphin bought their continued loyalty with lavish gifts. Wigton became lord of Dun-le-Roi. John Stewart of Darnley received the castle of Concressault and later the lordship of Aubigny. Largesse

was showered upon their companions. But if Henry V's larger scheme was frustrated, he succeeded in his immediate objective. The 'new army of Scotland' could not be raised without Douglas. He was one of its designated commanders and much of its strength would have to be found among his retainers. Recruitment came to a halt. The Castilian fleet which was to carry it to La Rochelle was already at sea. The seamen of La Rochelle were making ready for the voyage. But within three months the Castilians had withdrawn to their home ports without ever passing north of Finistère, and the Rochelais had been stood down. The Dauphin clung to the hope that the Scots would still come, but the project was not revived until a year later in very different circumstances.[41]

Notes

1
PRO E101/49/36, E403/645, mm. 2–3; *Facs. Nat. MSS*, no. 36 (misdated and misattributed). On the *Grace Dieu*: Carpenter-Turner (1954 [1]); Rose (1977); *Soper Accounts*, 191. Genoa: *Proc. PC*, ii, 236–7, 245–6, 255–7; *Foed.*, ix, 652, 700–1, 758, 860, x, 16, 66, 93, 117–23. Castile: BN Coll. Dupuy 223, fols 206–206vo (repudiate treaty); *Coll. Doc. Murcia*, xvi, nos 19–23, 27.

2
Orig. Letters, III. i, 67; *Foed.*, ix, 907 (naming wrong church); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, 389–90.

3
Journ. B. Paris, 140; *Foed.*, ix, 910; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 268, 271, 280; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 407; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, ii, 13; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 377–8. English numbers at Troyes: *Foed.*, ix, 881.

4
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 381–2, 402–3; Fenin, *Mém.*, 138–9; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 268–70; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 442–4; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 378. Scots: BN Clair. 34/2595 (Picardy); Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 270 (Montereau); Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 122 (Melun). Cash: BN Fr. 26043/5475, 5479–80, Fr. n.a. 20028/139–40.

5
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 403–6; Fenin, *Mém.*, 139–42; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 378; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 270–4; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 458; *Lettres des rois,* ii, 383–4. Date: AN JJ175/175, 196. John the F.: *Schnerb (1982), 129–34.

6
'Chron. Cordeliers', 286; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 407 (wrongly referring to Villeneuve-lès-Avignon), 409, iv, 9. Barges: *Dépenses*, nos 946, 1527–8, 1603, 1605; *Comptes E. Bourg.*, ii, no. 5312. Melun: Pisan, *Livre des fais*, i, 49, ii, 41; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 276; G. Leroy, 185–6, 216–17.

7
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iii, 410–12; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 277–80, 285–6; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 378, 379–82; Fenin, *Mém.*, 141–5; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 122; Chastellain, *Chron.*, i, 156–9. Guns: *Comptes E. Bourg.*, i, nos 723, 1010, 1475, ii, nos 5288, 5296, 5337. Date: *Itin. Ph. le Bon*, 9; PRO C64/14, m. 25.

8

Clisson: *Preuves Bretagne,* ii, 1076. Champtoceaux: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 32; Bouchart, *Gr. Chron.*, ii, 266–7; Le Baud, 456. Saumur: Beaucourt, i, 209–10 (suggesting that the army was intended for the relief of Melun, but the choice of a mustering point in the western Loire makes this unlikely).

9

Preuves Bretagne, ii, 1038–9, 1076–7; Bouchart, *Gr. Chron.*, ii, 267–9; AN X1a 9200, fol. 270 (proceedings against O. de Blois); *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 404–6. Contacts with English: *Lettres des rois,* ii, 381–2; *Foed.*, x, 2. Date of release: Morice and Taillandier, i, 479.

10

Foed., x, 2, 4–6, 8–13, 15–16; Bouchart, *Gr. Chron.*, ii, 269; *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 1049–50, 1064–5, 1070–80.

11

BN Clair. 3/36, 4/148, 26/1874, 63/4881vo, 88/6950, 59/4503vo etc.; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 379 ('vers les marches de Yèvre et Châteauregnard'). Vertus: BN Fr. 26043/5494; Laborde, *Preuves*, iii, nos 6265–6, 6310. Dauphin: Beaucourt, 211.

12

Vertus and Scots: BL Add. Chart. 291, 292. Buchan, Wigton: AN KK53, fols 8vo, 11; *Exch. R. Scot.*, iv, 332–3; *Beaucourt, i, 336n^{2}. Darnley: AN KK53, fol. 11vo. Negotiations in France: *Foed.*, x, 18, 19.

13

Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 381, 383; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, ii, 18–19; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 286; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 10–12; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 286–7; *Foed.*, x, 19–20, 29–30.

14

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 10, 12–15; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 754; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 383–4; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 287–8; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 122; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 287–8; AN JJ 171/134 (fine). Prisoners in Paris: *Journ. B. Paris,* 143; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 387–8, ii, 2–3, 9–10, 12–14, 16; AN JJ171/350, 172/246 (ransoms). Barbazan: Fenin, *Mém.*, 146; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 69–70; *Mém. France et Bourgogne*, i, 305–8; BN Fr. 5061, fols 102, 102vo–104, 106–106vo, 117vo–118, 122vo–123 (proceedings); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 351.

15

Boucicaut: *Quicherat. Vendôme: PRO E28/33/50. Removal to provinces: *Foed.*, ix, 546; *Issues Exch.*, 352, 358–9.

16

Proc. PC, ii, 271–2; PRO E403/645, mm. 8, 12 (15 June, 12 July) (Bourbon to France); *Facs. Nat. MSS*, i, no. 40 (misdated); *Foed.*, ix, 923, x, 20–1, 27, 63–4, 70–1, 85–7, 263; AD Côte d'Or B1617, fols 40–40vo; *Titres Bourbon*, ii, 5162, 5164–5, 5175, 5183; *Doc. Galard*, ii, 205–44 (sales). Incarceration in England: Somerville, i, 185 and n^{3}.

17

PRO E364/54, m. 3 (Meryng); *Proc. PC*, ii, 277–9; *Foed.*, x, 46–7; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* iv, 448; *Cron. Norm.*, 64. Pontorson: Gruel, *Chron.*, 22–3; Bouchart, *Gr. Chron.*, ii, 271–2 (probably late Nov. 1420, see *Lettres de Jean V*, i, p. cxxvi).

18

Foix: BN Coll. Doat 214, fols 53vo–55; AD Pyr.-Atl. E436; *Foed.*, x, 46. Albret, Ste-Bazeille: *Foed.*, x, 41–5; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 294. Plans: Vale (1970), 78–80.

19

Journ. B. Paris, 144–5; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 15–17, 22; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, i, 389.

20

Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 182–4; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 1–2, 6; *Cron. Norm.*, 61–2; *Journ. B. Paris*, 145–6; PRO C64/14, m. 19d; Grassoreille, 115, 117; Thompson (1991), 217–18.

21

Foed., x, 30–2; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 384–5; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 289–92. *Aides*: *Ord.*, xi, 109–11. Coinage: Lafaurie, *Monnaies*, i, nos 388, 391, 402; *Ord.*, xi, 107–8; *Contribuables*, 4, 87–92; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 385. Indictment: *Foed.*, x, 33–5; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 17–20, 36–7; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 385.

22

Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 292–3; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 23; *Journ. B. Paris*, 147; *Foed.*, x, 49–50; *Lettres des rois,* ii, 388–9; *Sauval, iii, 288 (mansion);*Nichols; BN Fr. 20691, p. 704 (Bastille); BL Add. Chart. 111 (Salisbury). Burgundians: *Gall. Reg.*, iv, no. 16495; AN K1009, fol. 3vo; Schnerb (2004), 65–8; Grassoreille, 127–9. Banquets: *Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 703; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 22; *Cron. Norm.*, 62–3. Departures: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 23; *Itin. Ph. le Bon*, 13.

23

Cochon, *Chron.*, 285; *Cron. Norm.*, 63–4. Coinage: *Rôles normands,* nos 937–8, 1373; Lafaurie, *Monnaies*, i, no. 445. Silver loan: Foed., x, 58, Subsidy: *Rôles normands*, nos 925; BL Add. Chart. 507.

24

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 24; *Brut*, ii, 425–6, 492, 563; *Parl. Rolls*, ix, 249, 251, 254, 259, 260 [1, 7, 13, 25, 27], 261; Usk, *Chron.*, 270; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 786–8; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 292–3. Mutinies: *Rose (1977), 4–5.

25

London: *Brut*, ii, 426–7, 445–7, 492; Gregory, 'Chron.', 138–41; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 297–300; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 756; Strecche, 'Chron.', 183–4. Parliament: *CCR 1419–22*, 135–6. Tour: Strecche, 'Chron.', 184–5; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 24–5; 'Northern Chron.', 290; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 304–5.

26

*Beaucourt, i, 360; AN KK50, fols 2vo, 6vo; 'Nouv. doc. Etats-Gen.', 150, 151; Ditcham (thesis), 24–5; *Beaucourt, i, 336n^{2} (reinforcements); *Preuves Bretagne,* ii, 965.

27

French official reports at *Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 732 and *Compayré, 266 (despatch of Buchan and Wigton); Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 99–102 (late, but best-informed chronicle account); Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 389–90; *Lib. Pluscard.*, i, 353–7; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 118–20; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 301–4; London, Coll. Arms MS 9, fols 42vo–43; Hardyng, *Chron.*, 384–5; *Brut*, ii, 447; 'Geste des nobles', 180–1 (body count). Somerset ransom: Arsenal 4522, fol. 18vo. Dauphin at Poitiers: AN KK53, fol. 9vo. Scots in Touraine: Ditcham (Thesis), 34. Clarence's body: *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 762; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 39. Processions: *Inv. AC Périgueux,* 98. Rewards: AN KK50, fol. 2vo, 9vo; 'Geste des nobles', 181; Anselme, vii, 56 (Lafayette).

28

'Nouv. doc. Etats-Gen.', 146–8; *Beaucourt, i, 360, 458–60.

29

AN KK50, fol. 2vo; *Preuves Bretagne,* ii, 1090–3, 1164; *Beaucourt, i, 457.

30

Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 21, 41–3; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 294, 295

31

Duchess: Plancher, iv, 30–1. Bec: *Chron. Bec*, 89–93; *Rôles Normands*, no. 1000. Rouen: *Rouen Doc.*, pp. cii–ciii. Paris: Grassoreille, 135n[1]; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 17–18; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 37; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, ii, 33–4; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 294.

32

*Beaucourt, i, 457, 458–9; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 391; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 40–1; Waurin, *Rec. cron.*, ii, 361–2; Chastellain, *Chron.*, i, 227–30. Defence of Normandy: *Foed.*, x, 99, 106–8, 112–13, 131; PRO C64/16, mm. 41, 40d. Château-Gontier: Joubert (1888 [2]). Armour: AN KK53, fols 82–87, 94vo.

33

Chron. R. St-Denis, iv, 462; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 391; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 45. Bretons: *Beaucourt, i, 457, 461; BN Fr. 26044/5670–5672. Narbonne: BN PO 560/Burlin/2; 1208/de Fosseux/5; 1940/Mesieres/15, etc.; *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 965.

34

Army: Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 307–8; PRO E101/70/4 (657–80), E101/70/5 (681–710), E101/70/6 (711–37); E101/50/1; BL Stowe 440, fols 42vo–43. Transports: PRO E403/649, mm. 3, 4, 7 (15 Apr., 9, 17 May); *Foed.*, x, 108–9. Loans: *Foed.*, x, 96–8; PRO E401/696 (10, 13 May); Steel, 162–3; *Proc. PC*, ii, 298–9; Harriss (1988), 94–101, 106–9.

35

Parl. Rolls, ix, 265 [1]; *Foed.*, x, 110, 113–15; *Rec. Convoc.*, v, 108; Harriss (1985), 150–1.

36

Foed., x, 113–15; *Parl. Rolls*, x, 18–19 [17], 172–3 [34], 272–4 [17], 334–7 [16]; *Rot. Parl.*, iv, 159; Stratford, 168–9 (Agincourt); PRO E364/60, m. 1 (Suffolk). Customs: Carus-Wilson and Coleman, *Export trade*, 57; Steel, 163.

37

PRO E364/69, mm. 6–6vo (Philip). Norman *taille*: Newhall (1924), 174–6; Wylie and Waugh, iii, 252–5.

38

Coinage: *Comptes Trésor*, pp. lxviii–lxix; *Ord.*, xi, 97–9; *Contribuables*, 89, 225–6; *Ord.*, xi, 122–3; Lafaurie, *Monnaies*, i, nos 437, 442; *Ord.*, xi, 122–6, 128–9; *Rec. doc. monnaies*, ii, 328–9; Dieudonné (1912), 263–5. Administration: *Ord.*, xi, 95, 103–4; Borrelli de Serres, iii, 160–1.

39

Issues Exch., 366; *Rot. Scot.*, ii, 227; *Exch. R. Scot.*, iii, 339, 344, 345–6, 347. On Clamecy: *Journ. B. Paris*, 121n[2].

40

Foed., x, 99–100, 123–5.

41

Gifts: *Lib. Pluscard.*, i, 353–4; AN K168/91 (Aubigny). Castilians: *Proc. PC*, ii, 364; *CPR 1416–22*, 233–4; *Beaucourt, i, 336n[2]; *Daumet (1898), 223.

CHAPTER XVIII

The Siege of Meaux: The Death of Princes, 1421–1422

In the early hours of 11 June 1421, Henry V arrived at Calais accompanied by his brother the Duke of Gloucester, the King of Scotland, and some 4,200 fresh troops. The Duke of Burgundy had agreed to meet him with his own army on the Somme. Their original plan had been to conduct a coordinated campaign against the Dauphinist garrisons of Picardy. Henry was to deal with the menacing enclave of Jacques d'Harcourt around Le Crotoy and Saint-Valéry at the mouth of the Somme, while the Duke of Burgundy laid siege to Compiègne, the largest Dauphinist garrison of the Oise. But by the time that the English King arrived in France these plans had been overtaken by events. The military situation was deteriorating rapidly, and all available troops had to be used for fire-fighting.

Henry met Philip of Burgundy at Montreuil on the Somme on 25 June. It was a difficult encounter. The Duke was suffering from a fever and only intermittently able to attend to business. He had no more than a few hundred men with him. The rest of his army was due to muster at the beginning of July, but there were serious doubts about how much manpower he could provide. Philip was in serious financial difficulty in the summer of 1421 and this had made it difficult for him to retain captains. By comparison the Dauphin was well-funded for the first time since he had set up his own government. The *taille* granted to him by the Estates-General at Clermont had given him the means to pay for field operations on a large scale. Henry had been met on the road by a messenger with the news that the Dauphin was approaching Chartres with at least 10,000 men at his back. The Dauphinist companies around Paris had resumed their slow strangulation of the capital, and a new garrison had been installed on the Yonne at Villeneuve, threatening the city's communications with Burgundy. The capital was in turmoil. Its inhabitants were panicked by the advance of the Dauphin's army and the raids of his partisans. There had been riots in the Rue Saint-Antoine and demonstrations in the Place de Grève.

Philip and Henry discussed certain '*grandes conclusions*' concerning the political role of Charles VI and the future of the

French kingdom, but these large generalities were quickly put aside. Henry insisted that the first priority was to secure the capital and to check the progress of the Dauphin's offensive. So, after conducting a brief demonstration on the Somme, the King left for Paris on 28 June to confer with the Duke of Exeter, reinforce his garrison and escort Charles VI to the safety of Vincennes. He took some 700 men with him. The rest of the English army marched to Mantes with the Duke of Gloucester and the King of Scotland. Philip of Burgundy was temporarily bailed out with a special grant of 3,000 gold *écus* from the French royal treasury, and left to attend to the muster of his army. He agreed to bring these men south as soon as they had appeared and join forces with the English King on the Seine. Together, they planned to confront the Dauphin in the Beauce.[1]

Chartres was a medium-sized city in the middle of the flat plain of the Beauce, with an ancient circuit of walls dating mainly from the twelfth century. It was defended by a Burgundian garrison commanded by John, Bastard of Thian, a professional *routier* who had played a prominent part in the defence of Senlis and Rouen. He had recently been reinforced by contingents from Paris and some Englishmen from the garrisons of the Normandy. A subsidiary garrison had been posted at Gallardon, which stood across the road from Paris ten miles to the east. A gaunt fragment of its massive circular keep still stands over the town, all that remains of what was once one of the most imposing fortresses of the region. The Dauphin's troops stormed Galardon on 25 June 1421. Its defenders were all put to death as traitors and the town sacked. They had been summoned to surrender several times in due form, the Dauphin wrote in a letter to the city of Tours; it was necessary to make an example of them. At about the end of June, the Dauphinists invested Chartres itself.

The siege lasted for only a few days. As soon as the English reached the Seine, the Dauphin precipitately left. After riding at breakneck speed across the southern Beauce, he and his entourage reached Vendôme, fifty miles away, on 5 July. Although the army around Chartres substantially outnumbered the combined field forces of Henry V and Philip of Burgundy, it was gradually withdrawn south over the following days and then dispersed, with orders to reassemble at Vendôme on 15 August. It was an extraordinary decision, which left the Beauce and the Orléanais wide open to invasion by the Anglo-Burgundian army for the next month. From Vendôme, the Dauphin wrote an embarrassed explanation to his followers. His army had had difficulty feeding itself, he said, and was suffering from disease and desertion. This was probably true. The Dauphinists' inability to set up a proper

supply train or efficient foraging system was a perennial weakness of their military organisation. But there was another, unspoken reason. If the siege had been maintained, a pitched battle beneath the walls of Chartres would have been unavoidable. The Dauphin's councillors were reluctant to hazard their whole cause on a single battle against the acknowledged master of modern warfare, and unwilling to expose the last of the Valois line to the risk of death or capture. It was a humiliating end to the Dauphin's most promising campaign to date. It would be eight years before he next took the field in person.[2]

Henry V arrived at Mantes to rejoin his army on 9 July 1421, only to be greeted by the news that the enemy had vanished. On the following day, the Duke of Burgundy joined him. Deprived of their prey, the two men agreed to divide their forces. Philip turned back to confront Jacques d'Harcourt in Picardy, while Henry V crossed the Seine in pursuit of the Dauphin. Philip's was an important military objective, but Henry's was essentially political. He needed to efface the impact of the battle of Baugé by bringing the Dauphin to battle, or at least by demonstrating his adversary's impotence. So the English army crossed the Seine and on 18 July, arrived outside the walls of Dreux.

Dreux was an important walled town on the west bank of the Eure. Its powerful castle, sited on a spur of rock at the highest point of the town, housed the largest Dauphinist garrison of the region. The captain, a Gascon professional, and his deputy were both absent from their posts. Morale among the defenders was low. The Dauphin, depressed and reclusive, had withdrawn to Chinon, leaving the conduct of the campaign to his councillors. They did nothing at all for three weeks. Finally, on 5 August, a council of war met in the Duke of Orléans' castle of Blois. The Dauphin did not attend. But the Earl of Buchan and his Scottish lieutenants were there, together with the other military officers and the leading members of the Dauphin's council, Robert le Maçon, Tanneguy du Châtel, the Vicomte of Narbonne and Regnault de Chartres. They agreed that something had to be done to relieve Dreux. Otherwise the garrison was likely to surrender and other garrisons would be reluctant to hold out. The army of Chartres was due to reassemble on 15 August. The council resolved to increase its numbers by a general summons of men-at-arms in the regions loyal to the Dauphin. The new recruits were ordered to appear at a second muster at Vendôme on the 25th. This implied a delay of at least three weeks before the campaign got under way.[3]

They did not have that long. As the Dauphinist council was meeting at Blois, the English succeeded in forcing their way into the

outer bailey of the castle of Dreux. On 8 August 1421 the garrison, holed up in the formidable old keep, agreed to surrender unless they were relieved in the next twelve days. On 20 August the castle opened its gates in accordance with the surrender terms. The garrison received safe-conducts out on condition that they undertook not to take up arms against Henry or his allies for at least a year. But there were, as always, exceptions. The lord of the nearby castle of Tillières, who had surrendered it to the Dauphin's officers, was found among the garrison. The records showed that he had previously sworn allegiance to Henry V. He was summarily hanged. The English then swept through the Beauce, taking the surrenders of almost all the garrisons installed by the Dauphin in June. The only recorded resistance was at Galardon, which was taken by assault for the second time that summer. Reaching Chartres, the English King paused while his army rested and fresh troops were stripped from the garrisons of Normandy to add to their numbers. By the time that the English resumed their advance south, they must have been between 4,000 and 5,000 strong.[4]

In the last week of August 1421 Henry V marched down the valley of the River Loir towards Vendôme in search of the decisive battle with the Dauphin. It proved elusive, for Henry was unwilling to risk a major engagement except on terrain of his own choice and the Earl of Buchan, who was in command of the reconstituted French army, was determined not to allow him that advantage. Buchan had concentrated his forces near Fréteval, a castle on the banks of the Loir some ten miles north-east of Vendôme. They were arrayed in battle order across the road by which the English army was approaching. Buchan's army had continued to grow with the arrival of fresh contingents from Brittany and must by now have numbered at least 12,000 men. Henry V came within a few miles of them. But, after hesitating for a day or two, he decided that the French position was too strong and their numbers too great, and retreated back to Châteaudun. From there, he turned east towards Orléans.

15 Alençon, the Beauce and the Loire,
May–September 1421

With more than twice the strength of his adversary, Buchan might have been expected to pursue the English army with his

whole force. In fact, as soon as Henry V had withdrawn, the French army broke up. The reason once again was the failure of the army's supplies. After two weeks encamped around Vendôme, the troops had exhausted the supplies for miles around and were facing starvation. Buchan was obliged to divide his forces to enable them to feed themselves. The bulk of his men withdrew south, intending to cross the Loire at Blois and make for the Gascon march. The Bretons withdrew west towards Lower Normandy and the Breton march. The Scottish corps and the rest of the French troops set off in pursuit of the English under the command of Buchan himself, accompanied by the Vicomte of Narbonne and Tanneguy du Châtel. They made no attempt to engage Henry's army. Instead, they made for Orléans, assuming that this was the English King's objective, and shut themselves in the city.

If Henry V had ever intended to attack Orléans, he quickly thought better of it. Once he had discovered the disposition of the French forces, he hit upon a bold and extremely risky strategy. He resolved to cross the Loire and intercept the troops heading for the Gascon march south of Blois. This proved to be a serious mistake. Henry first tried to cross the river at Beaugency, a walled town at the edge of the Orléanais with an important stone bridge. But although the town was captured, the river crossing was blocked by a powerful keep guarding the northern end of the bridge. After a week had been lost in trying to force a way onto the bridge, Henry's scouts eventually found a practicable ford opposite Saint-Dyé, about eleven miles downstream. The English crossed the river here and marched west along the left bank of the Loire towards Blois. They now found themselves in the heart of Dauphinist territory, a region of many defended castles, whose garrisons launched damaging attacks on the flanks of their army. Foraging in such conditions was almost impossible. Hunger set in, and then dysentery. Henry's army began to experience heavy losses. By the time they reached Blois, the French had retreated back across the bridge into the town where they were beyond reach. The English passed some days in raiding across the marshy wastes of the Sologne south of the town before abandoning the enterprise and retracing their footsteps to Saint-Dyé. When they arrived at the ford, they found it defended from the north bank by Tanneguy du Châtel with part of Buchan's army. It was a dangerous moment. Henry V might have found himself trapped south of the Loire. But Tanneguy lost his nerve and backed off. As a result, the English were able to reach the right bank under his nose, more or less unscathed. Henry marched up the Loire, passing beneath the walls of Orléans, before turning north across the Beauce towards the valley of the Yonne. Both sides claimed

victory in this inconclusive campaign. But the English had unquestionably come off worse. They had lost about a third of the reinforcements that Henry had brought with him from England, without achieving either the victory or the propaganda coup for which he had hoped.[5]

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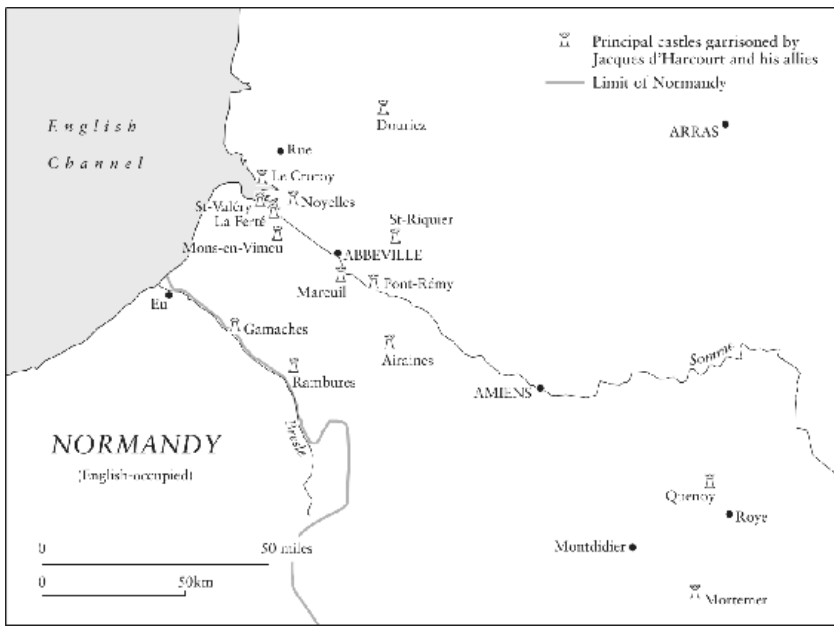
The Duke of Burgundy did little better in Picardy. After leaving Henry V at Mantes, he had marched north with John of Luxembourg to deal with Jacques d'Harcourt's companies around Le Crotoy. However, his army was still pitifully small, less than 1,200 men. And during his absence Harcourt had been reinforced. With a combined strength of between 3,000 and 5,000 mounted men, the Dauphinists' northern garrisons had developed a formidable capacity for coordinating their operations. They worked like a single army, combining forces for defence and for major offensives. Early in July 1421 Guy de Nesle lord of Offémont, who served as the Dauphin's lieutenant in the valley of the Oise, arrived in the Somme with the famous Gascon captain Poton de Saintrailles to support Jacques d'Harcourt. They brought with them a mounted force of about 2,200 men from the Dauphinist garrisons of the Oise and the Marne. Together with Jacques d'Harcourt they launched a powerful offensive in western Picardy. They laid siege to Rue, an important river port on the north side of the great bay of the Somme, and then advanced up the Somme valley towards Amiens. On about 20 July they captured Saint-Riquier, a walled abbey-town just outside Abbeville. From here, they were able to take control of the surrounding castles, and prey on the Burgundian towns of Picardy and Artois.

Philip of Burgundy was still about forty miles away when he learned of these disasters. On 22 July, he captured the heavily defended crossing of the Somme at Pont-Rémy and made for Abbeville. There he divided his small force. Part of it was sent to relieve Rue under the command of Jean de Fosseux. Philip himself took the rest and at about the end of July, laid siege to Saint-Riquier. Philip's strength was entirely inadequate for a siege on this scale. The defenders had put hundreds of men into the town. They had filled their stores with victuals. They had sent away anyone in the town who could not fight on the walls, along with most of the horses. They had strengthened the walls and the main buildings. They fought back with their own artillery, and mounted well-timed sorties into the Burgundian lines that inflicted heavy casualties. As August wore on, however, the advantage passed to the Burgundians. Henry V made another 12,000 gold *écus* available from the royal

treasury in Paris to relieve Philip's continuing financial problems. The Duke was joined outside Saint-Riquier by additional cavalry raised in the region by his councillor Jean de Croy. Powerful reinforcements arrived from Burgundy which roughly doubled his strength. Infantry were contributed by Amiens and other northern towns. English troops were summoned from the garrison of Calais. By the end of August Philip's payroll strength exceeded 4,000 men. The total, when urban levies, Englishmen and *gros varlets* are included, must have been twice that.



16 The Somme, 1421–1422

Alarmed by the growing strength of his enemy Jacques d'Harcourt appealed for help to all the Dauphinist garrisons of northern France. On 29 August news reached the Burgundian encampment that a Dauphinist company, said to be more than 800 strong, was advancing through Vimeu towards the ford over the Somme at Blanchetaque to reinforce Jacques d'Harcourt. They had been recruited by Poton de Saintrailles and his business partner La Hire from other garrisons as far away as Meaux, and included some of the most famous captains in the Dauphin's service. That night, Philip abandoned the siege of Saint-Riquier and recrossed the Somme in the early hours to intercept them. The Dauphinists got to the ford first. Jacques d'Harcourt was waiting for them on the other side with part of the garrisons of Le Crotoy and Saint-Riquier. But the tide was in, and neither contingent was able to reach the other. The Dauphinists found themselves trapped against the left bank of

the river by the advancing army of the Duke of Burgundy.

Philip had much the larger force, but he handled it badly. His troops were spread out over several miles along the road from Abbeville. When the vanguard, comprising about 1,000 cavalry, reached the small village of Mons-en-Vimeu, they found themselves confronted by the whole Dauphinist force. Philip was forced to accept battle with only a small part of his army. He was knighted in the field by John of Luxembourg, and in turn knighted many of the young men around him. Shortly, the Dauphinists opened the fighting with a cavalry charge to the centre of the Burgundian line, in the hope of dispersing them before the rest of their force arrived. The Burgundian line disintegrated. The rumour spread that Philip himself had been killed or wounded. At this, some 400 of Philip's cavalry turned tail and fled the field in disorder, pursued by the triumphant Dauphinist horsemen. The rest were left to fight it out in a series of confused skirmishes scattered across a considerable area. The Burgundians gradually got the upper hand. Two of the largest Dauphinist companies abandoned their fellows and fled while the battle was still fluid, eventually reaching safety behind the walls of Saint-Valéry. The rest were overwhelmed. Their losses were high. About half of the entire Dauphinist force had been killed. At least 120 prisoners were taken. The haul included Guy de Nesle's brother Louis, two brothers of Guillaume de Gamaches, the famous captain of Compiègne, and Poton de Saintrailles himself. Burgundian propagandists attributed prodigies of valour to their duke.

It was, however, a costly victory which did nothing for Philip's reputation as a commander. His own army had been badly mauled. His principal captain John of Luxembourg had been wounded in the face. They had done nothing to dislodge Harcourt from his fortresses at the mouth of the Somme. Indeed some 300 refugees from Poton de Saintrailles' companies eventually succeeded in joining him there. Philip did not even recover Saint-Riquier, for after much discussion in his council it was decided that he did not have enough men to resume the siege. On 6 September the Duke withdrew into Artois and paid off his army. Later that year, in November, he negotiated a deal with Guy de Nesle under which Saint-Riquier was surrendered to him in return for the release of the prisoners taken in the battle. The Dauphin was highly satisfied with the way that things had gone. A month after the Duke of Burgundy's withdrawal, he appointed Jacques d'Harcourt as his lieutenant in the valley of the Somme.[6]

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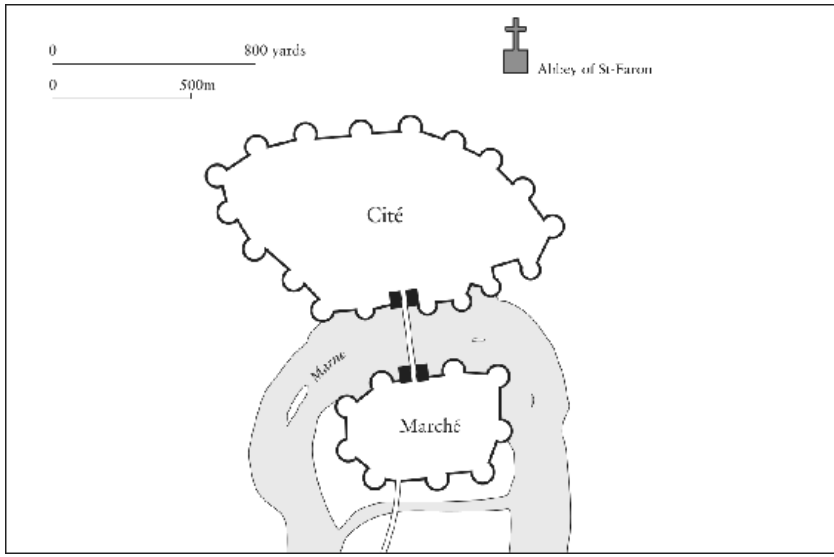
The miseries of Paris and the Île de France reached their nadir in

the summer of 1421. After the failure of the new coinage the inexorable course of devaluation resumed. In August, the silver *gros*, traditionally worth eighteen pennies, was reduced to five and later to two and a half. A short-lived attempt to force people to pay old debts in strong money provoked uproar. 'They might as well cut off our heads as make us pay our rents in strong money,' declared a butcher of Beauvais arrested for seditious talk, 'unless we cut off the heads of the judges instead.' The food situation was as difficult as ever. The harvest was late. All the main roads into the city were cut by Dauphinist fortresses, except on the routes going west through the Beauce and the valley of the Seine. In August prices hit record levels. In hindsight it is clear the worst was over. The harvest, when it finally came in, was abundant. A new issue of copper pennies, with a respectable and stable metal content, began to appear in August. In the autumn, prices would start to fall. But it was some time before these changes made any impression on the febrile insecurity of the Parisians.[7]

After a ten-day march from the Loire, Henry V's army arrived before the walls of Villeneuve on the Yonne on 22 September 1421. Villeneuve was a walled town on the east side of the river, south of the city of Sens. Originally captured by Henry in July 1420, it had been lost the following January when a Dauphinist force under the Vicomte of Narbonne had approached unnoticed and come over the walls at dead of night while the garrison was asleep. At the time the incident had been a serious setback to the Anglo-Burgundian cause, for it resulted in the intermittent closure of one of the main routes by which supplies could still reach the capital. Henry made short work of it now. The garrison surrendered in return for their lives after just five days. Writing to the city of Bordeaux, Henry declared that he had now reopened the whole course of the Seine and the Yonne to traffic. The main problem, however, lay further north in the valley of the Marne, an important supply route for wine, grain and building materials, which had been closed for the past three years by the large Dauphinist garrison at Meaux.[8]



17 The siege of Meaux, October 1421–May 1422

Meaux was a cathedral city on the north bank of the Marne some thirty miles upstream of Paris. It comprised two distinct fortified enclosures. The city itself stood on the right bank of the river. It was weak, defended by the old castle of the counts of Champagne overlooking the river at its south-western corner, and by an ancient circuit of walls dating from Roman times, which had been reinforced in the fourteenth century with towers roughly built from stone and rubble. Extensive unwalled suburbs clustered around the gates. The place owed its strength to an immense fortified suburb on the opposite bank of the river known as the Marché, which was connected to the city by a long stone bridge. The Marché occupied a tight bend in the river, which flowed beneath its walls on three sides while the fourth, on the south, was protected by a canal cut across the peninsula. A Dauphinist garrison of several hundred men had been stationed in the Marché by Tanneguy du Châtel in June 1418 after the Dauphin's flight from Paris and had held it ever since. The conduct of the defence was in the hands of Guichard de Chissay, a nobleman from Touraine who seems to have been sent there specially by the Dauphin's council when the English army's intentions became clear. But the energy behind the defence was provided by the man who had commanded the Marché from the outset, a brutal Gascon *routier* called the Bastard of Vaurus, who like so many of the Dauphin's captains had originally come north with Bernard of Armagnac. He was supported by Peron de Luppé, another Gascon captain of the same ilk. Between them, they had about 1,000 men under their command, many of whom had recently arrived from other Dauphinist fortresses.

On 6 October 1421 the advance guard of the English army arrived outside the city under the command of the Duke of Exeter. They arrived without warning, and were able to take the northern suburbs before the defenders had had time to destroy them. The rest of the English army appeared about three weeks later. The whole beseiging force was surprisingly small, probably no more than 2,000 men at the outset of the siege, perhaps half as much again with its pages and varlets and the great corps of labourers, miners and craftsmen. The Duke of Exeter established his headquarters in the rich Benedictine abbey of St Faron in the northern suburbs, and the Earl of March in the Franciscan convent on the east side. The King himself was based in the hamlet of Rutel by the Paris road, about a mile to the west. South of the river, the Earl of Warwick blockaded the Marché from his station by the canal. The siege of Meaux was conducted in the elaborate and methodical way that the French had learned to expect at Rouen. The English cleared all the satellite garrisons which the Dauphinists had established in the region. They dug trenches and palisades around their encampments. They threw a timber pontoon bridge over the Marne to prevent boats entering or leaving the city and to connect the siege lines on the two banks of the river. They established food markets around the city, which were kept supplied by a procession of river barges from Champagne. They stationed a large number of cannon and trebuchets around the walls. The Burgundian herald Jean Le Fèvre came to look. ‘It was an impressive thing to see,’ he reported.[9]

Henry had a low opinion of the Dauphin’s garrison troops. He did not expect the defenders of Meaux to resist for long. In fact they held out for seven months, longer than any other garrison of the period. The defenders repaired the breaches made by Henry’s cannon and siege engines. They cleared by night the ditches that the English had filled in by day. They launched destructive sorties from the gates. They drove back attempts to approach the walls with artillery fire. For a long time the besiegers made almost no impression on the defences. The weather added to their miseries. It was cold and wet. Shortly, the rain turned to sleet and snow. In December the Marne broke its banks and flooded the plain on which the English were encamped. They had to abandon their siege lines for a fortnight and build new ones on higher ground further back. Meanwhile the defenders were able to send foraging parties out in small boats to replenish their depleted stores. The English, already suffering from heavy battle casualties, began to lose men to dysentery and desertion as well. The pay records suggest that by Christmas the King had lost about a sixth of his army. One of the dead was Henry V’s handsome and popular cousin, the seventeen-

year-old John Cornwall, whose head was shot off by a gunstone. His father Sir John Cornwall, who was standing beside him, was wounded by the same artillery barrage. Sir John had had a famous military career, playing a prominent part in every campaign in France since 1412 and waxing rich on the traffic in prisoners of war. But the brutal end of his only son shattered him. He withdrew from the army, declaring that his soldiering days were over, and returned home. It would be another fifteen years before he fought in an English army again.[10]

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Henry V's resources were now very tightly stretched. At the end of 1421 there were between 8,000 and 10,000 English troops in France, most of whom were immobilised by the need to hold down Normandy and Paris. The army in Normandy had been depleted since the conquest, as captains returned home at the expiry of their indentures and lesser men sloped away unobserved. It currently numbered about 4,700 men, almost all tied down in garrisons. Another 2,000 men could be furnished in an emergency by Englishmen who had received grants of land and castles in Normandy in return for military service. Between 600 and 1,000 men were required to hold Paris and Vincennes. These forces were extremely thinly spread. They could rarely be spared for field service, or even concentrated against an enemy offensive. The only field army at Henry's disposal was the expeditionary force of 4,200 men which had landed with him at Calais in June. It had been kept together ever since, and what was left of it was now in the siege lines at Meaux. But by the end of the year it had been reduced by sickness, casualties and desertions to just 1,700 men.

These arrangements were severely tested during the siege of Meaux. Unwilling to confront Henry V directly outside the city, the Dauphin's captains adopted a strategy of diversionary raids on Normandy. In October 1421, the Earl of Buchan and the Marshal Guy de Séverac invaded Lower Normandy from the march of Brittany with a large raiding force including a Scottish contingent, Richard of Brittany's Breton corps and part of the garrison of Mont-Saint-Michel. The Earl of Salisbury, the English commander in the sector, was unable to take the field for lack of troops. His men were obliged to cling to their walls as Buchan swept by, capturing Avranches and massacring the English garrison there. Far from being able to draw on the garrisons of Normandy to support his operations east of Paris, Henry was obliged to withdraw men from the siege and send them back to Normandy to prop up the Earl of Salisbury. Looking ahead, it was difficult to see where either the

men or the money would be found to conduct offensive operations in the north, let alone conquer the Kingdom of Bourges.[11]

Henry's problem was that in spite of his status as heir and Regent of France, he was still almost entirely dependent on English troops to man his armies. In Normandy he reserved the right to summon all landowners, French or English, but the right was only ever exercised in emergencies and then only to meet immediate threats to the province. The feudal host was called out during the crisis provoked by the Dauphinist invasion of Lower Normandy in November 1421 and again at the beginning of 1422, but there is no record of the numbers involved. The municipality of Paris occasionally raised undisciplined infantry levies from the inhabitants for major operations around the city. Parisian contingents fought at Melun and Meaux, but judging by the silence of the chroniclers contributed little to the success of these operations. There was also the Breton company of Arthur de Richemont, but he was very conscious of his ambiguous political position with both his brothers now active partisans on the Dauphin's side. He kept out of action as far as possible, as the Dauphin's councillors observed with satisfaction. He fought at Meaux, but for less than a month. Apart from these contributions and a handful of Gascon, Breton and Savoyard soldiers of fortune, Henry never recruited any significant numbers of soldiers in France.[12]

The greatest disappointment was the Duke of Burgundy. At the time of the treaty of Troyes Henry had counted on the Duke to fill his manpower gap. But for all its political importance, the Burgundian alliance had brought him very little in the way of military support. Philip of Burgundy's armies were drawn almost entirely from two parts of his empire: the two Burgundies, and Artois and Picardy. The accounts of his receivers and treasurers suggest that each of them could produce up to about 3,000 men. The contributions of Flanders were irregular and of very mixed quality, and Philip's allies in Hainaut, Brabant and Liège were even less dependable. The Dauphinist operations on the southern flank of Burgundy, in the Mâconnais and the Nivernais, tied down much of the military manpower of the two Burgundies, while the activities of Jacques d'Harcourt and his allies meant that Philip's captains in Artois and Picardy had their hands full defending their own region. These preoccupations were particularly acute in the early years of Philip's reign and consumed much of what he spent on warfare. And the Duke had much less to spend on warfare than his father. But then John the Fearless had fought his wars in France mainly at the expense of the French Crown. His son did not have the same access

to the royal treasury. The one-off grants authorised by Henry V in the summer of 1421 were not repeated. In late 1421 and 1422 there was a general collapse of Philip's revenues, which fell to their lowest point for four decades. Since the siege of Melun, Philip of Burgundy had participated in only one brief campaign, on the Somme, with mixed results. He did nothing to support the English King's operations around Meaux. Perhaps it had been unrealistic to expect more.[13]

Politically, the Duke's attachment to the English alliance was cooling. It had always been regarded as the least of a number of evils, and there was never much personal warmth between the pleasure-loving Philip and the austere and imperious English King. Several of Philip's councillors had their own misgivings about the treaty of Troyes, and some of his captains remained unwilling to fight for the English. The Duke of Burgundy had already begun the gradual withdrawal from the internal politics of France which was to be the main theme of his long reign, concentrating his attention instead on the security and prosperity of a virtually autonomous multinational state. Early in 1421 Philip had seized the opportunity to buy the imperial county of Namur from its childless and bankrupt ruler. At least part of the reason for the Duke's financial problems was that he had exhausted his credit to raise the large cash price required. It was a sign of where his real priorities lay.[14]

In the new year, Henry V embarked on a determined search for reinforcements. England was naturally the first source of extra manpower to be tapped, but the effort only exposed the country's exhaustion. The Keeper, the Duke of Bedford, called on every available captain still in the country to appear before the council in London in January 1422 to report what forces they could raise to help the King in his extremity. To boost recruitment, he announced that he would lead them to France himself. But the results were disappointing. Bedford himself raised a company of 400 men. Another 340 were found by William Lord Clinton, an impoverished nobleman from Warwickshire with distinguished forebears but no recorded talents of his own, who had so far managed to stay out of the war in spite of his forty-four years. The rest consisted mainly of substitutes sent by men who could not or would not fight themselves, and diminutive companies of a single man-at-arms with three archers. In desperation, Henry began to look further afield for recruits. Ambassadors were sent to King Sigismund, to the princes of the German Rhineland, to Portugal to press his allies to send troops.[15]

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Queen Catherine had given birth to the future Henry VI at Windsor on 6 December 1421. The event, news of which reached Henry at Meaux at about Christmas-time, seemed to secure the future of the dual monarchy as well as any fragile infant life could do in the middle ages. It was received with shows of joy in both capitals. There were pealing bells in London and bonfires, processions and street parties in Paris. Henry's only recorded reaction was to send word to his wife that she must hear a Mass of the Trinity and dedicate the child to God.

The dour message suited the sombre mood at the English King's headquarters. For the first time since he had embarked on his enterprise, Henry V seems to have entertained real doubts about the outcome. He had not achieved the knock-out blow against the Dauphin for which he had hoped. He had not detached the Scots from the Dauphin's service. He had not persuaded the Duke of Brittany to abandon the alliance that he had made with the Dauphin at Sablé. He had not won over the mass of the French population, most of whom were indifferent in the areas under his government and hostile in the centre and south. His efforts to free the approaches to Paris from enemy garrisons had got bogged down in an interminable and damaging stalemate. Over the winter of 1421–2, Henry concluded that his ambitions could not be achieved by force. He signalled to Pope Martin V's representative in France that papal mediation would not be unwelcome. In the new year he raised the same question with the Duke of Burgundy. Philip arrived for talks at Meaux on 17 January 1422. It was evidently an important occasion. The Duke was accompanied by his closest advisers and some of the most influential men on the royal council in Paris. The passive figure of Charles VI came with them from Vincennes. For more than a week they were closeted together in secret session in the abbey of St Faron, where Henry had moved his headquarters after the flood. They had much to discuss, but the main item was the prospect of a negotiated peace with the Dauphin. War, Henry declared, was 'a long business, dangerous, risky and very difficult, especially between well-matched parties'. He could see no end to it without heavy casualties on both sides, huge physical destruction and 'infinite expense'. It is difficult to imagine what terms Henry could have hoped to negotiate with the Dauphin, short of renouncing the treaty of Troyes. But the King undoubtedly took the proposed negotiations seriously. He suggested that the Duke of Savoy, Amadeus VIII, a long-standing ally of the house of Burgundy, should act as mediator. It was agreed that Philip would approach him.

The Duke of Burgundy left Meaux for his Burgundian domains on

26 January 1422, and at the end of March travelled to Geneva. There, he discussed the proposed mediation with Amadeus VIII at the castle at Ripaille on the shores of Lake Geneva in the intervals of the showy jousts and noisy banquets. Amadeus agreed to act as mediator, and in the spring his ambassadors left for the court of the Dauphin. His efforts were seconded by Martin V. In February 1422 Martin sent a nuncio to France, the first since the ill-fated mission of Orsini and Fillastre four years earlier. His emissary was an Italian Carthusian of great holiness and simplicity of life, Niccolò Albergati, Bishop of Bologna. Albergati cannot have foreseen as he left Italy that he would pass much of the rest of his life trying to reconcile the warring parties in France.[16]

Given the reduced strength of the English forces around Meaux, if the Dauphin had made a determined attempt to relieve it, he might well have succeeded. It is far from clear why he did not. One reason was certainly his councillors' fear of the risks of battle. But there is also reason to think that the Dauphin was in financial difficulty. The *taille* voted at Clermont had been spent and the impressive armies that he had bought with it largely wasted. The money-raising potential of coinage devaluations was by now almost exhausted. Much of his army was serving on credit. The Dauphin's finances were not well-managed. Over the winter of 1421–2, he borrowed heavily and sold land and jewels to pay troops. By these means, he declared, he would raise a great army in the spring, including the long-awaited corps from Scotland and a large body of Italian bowmen.[17]

The only attempt to relieve the garrison of Meaux was a foolhardy enterprise of Guy de Nesle lord of Offémont. Early in March 1422 he tried to enter the beleaguered city. It was, according to a well-informed source, the Dauphin's idea. But Guy's forces were absurdly small. He found only forty companions to join him. On the night of 9 March, they crept through the English siege lines and reached the dry ditch on the north side of the city. The defenders had left ladders propped against the wall, camouflaged with sheets so that they would not be noticed against the white stone. Some of the men got over the walls. But Guy himself lost his foothold and fell into the ditch in full armour with a clatter that alerted the sentries. After a brief fight, he was badly wounded in the head and captured.

It is difficult to know what Offémont could have achieved if he had got into the city. The defenders were already in the last stages of demoralisation. The inhabitants had lost heart. They wanted to surrender to save their city and their lives. An English mine had almost reached the walls. As for the garrison, after the debacle of

Guy de Nesle they finally resolved to abandon the city and try to hold out in the Marché. On the following morning the professional soldiers were seen withdrawing from their posts on the walls and moving their possessions across the bridge into the fortress. A rumour spread through the streets that they were planning to burn the city behind them. One of the citizens climbed the ramparts and shouted to the English below what was happening. They put up a ladder for him, and he climbed down and was brought before Henry V. The King ordered an immediate general assault. It was about two o'clock in the afternoon. A Savoyard captain had already anticipated the King's order. He and his men were rushing forward with ladders and captured an undefended section of the walls. The gates were opened. The inhabitants fled for the churches as the English poured in. The English pursued the garrison through the streets towards the Marché. They assaulted the fortified gateway at the head of the bridge as the Dauphinists escaped into the fortress, pulling up the timber section of the bridge behind them. Over the following days, the Dauphinists looked down from the high walls of the Marché as the English set up their artillery on the islands in the Marne, closed the gap in the bridge with a kind of primitive prefabricated Bailey bridge, and took over the mills beneath the arches which had ground the garrison's grain only a week before.[18]

The siege of the Marché of Meaux lasted another two months. The English pressed home their attack with a new indifference to casualties which reflected Henry V's determination to have done with the siege at whatever cost. The gunners battered the walls with artillery at close range. The Earl of Warwick's division crossed the canal and, protected by a large 'sow' (or mobile timber shelter), established a foothold in the narrow fringe of ground between the walls and the water's edge. From here they captured the outworks of the great southern rampart. Sir Walter Hungerford, in command of the western sector, bridged the river and established another foothold, where his men began to construct a mine. On the east side, where the walls of the fortress descended straight into the water, Henry's engineers erected a high timber tower from prefabricated sections on two large barges moored in the river. From this structure, which overlooked the walls of the fortress, a bridge could be let down onto the ramparts. All of these operations had to be carried out under a rain of crossbow bolts and gunfire. The English suffered heavy losses, especially among their leading captains. Richard Beauchamp Earl of Worcester was struck dead by a cannonball. The northern knight Thomas Lord Clifford was felled by a crossbow bolt.[19]

At about the end of April 1422, as the preparations for the final

assault were nearing completion, the garrison sued for terms. There is good reason to think that the commanders' hands were forced by their subordinates, for none of the leaders was included in the committee appointed to negotiate with the English. Henry V, angry and frustrated after being held at bay for so long and humiliated by the jibes yelled at him from the ramparts, was at his most vindictive. Faced with the palpable hostility of the English commissioners, the garrison's representatives resolved to throw their commanders to the wolves. The terms, which were finally agreed on 2 May, were the harshest yet imposed on a recalcitrant garrison. Twelve leading members of the garrison were required to submit to the English King's mercy. Four of these, the Bastard of Vaurus and his cousin Denis de Vaurus, a lawyer called Jean de Rouvres of whom nothing is known, and the Dauphinist *bailli* of Meaux, Louis Gast, were to be surrendered at once. These men seem to have been singled out for their involvement in the garrison's terrorism of the past three years. They would be 'put to hyr doome and justise shalle be done and mynystryde to hem'. Three others were required to submit unconditionally with no assurance at all about their fate, including 'one that blewe and sownyd an horne duryng the sege that men say ys namyd Grasse'. The remaining five were chosen because they were associated directly or indirectly with other Dauphinist garrisons of the north. They would be made to buy their lives by arranging for the other garrisons to surrender. They included the Dauphin's representative Guichard de Chissay, the Gascon Peron de Luppé and the Abbot of St Faron Philip de Gamaches, whose brother was the captain of Compiègne. Also excluded from the amnesty were any found in the Marché who were thought to have been involved in the murder of John the Fearless, any English, Irish or Scots, any Frenchmen who had previously sworn to uphold the treaty of Troyes, and all of the professional artillerymen who had inflicted such heavy casualties on the besieging army in the final days of the siege. The rest of the garrison were promised their lives but required to surrender as prisoners of war. The entire contents of the fortress, victuals, war stores, horses, arms and personal possessions, were to be collected, inventoried, and surrendered to the conqueror. On these bleak terms, the defenders of the Marché agreed that they would surrender on 10 May.[20]

They had been promised no mercy and they received none. The Bastard of Vaurus was believed to have indiscriminately killed English and Burgundian prisoners of war and executed large numbers of peasants and townsmen who were unable to raise their ransom. Henry had him dragged through the streets of Meaux and

beheaded outside the walls even before the Marché had surrendered. His body was suspended from the elm tree outside the gates where he had hanged his victims, with his coat of arms pinned to his tunic and his head planted on a lance above. His cousin was hanged beside his corpse. Louis Gast and Jean de Rouvres were sent to Paris to be tried by the royal Provost. They were eventually beheaded at Les Halles, together with the unfortunate horn-blower. When the gates were opened on 10 May, between 700 and 800 surviving members of the garrison surrendered, in addition to a small number of non-combatants such as the Bishop of Meaux, who had made the mistake of taking refuge in the Marché and was treated as a prisoner of war like the rest. The prisoners were loaded into barges, fettered together in pairs by the legs, and taken to Paris. Most of the lesser prisoners were able to ransom themselves in quite a short time. Some of them died in the insanitary cells of the Châtelet. The others, who were being held for larger ransoms or for political reasons, were distributed during the summer among the castles of Normandy or taken to England. More than 150 were temporarily lodged in the Tower of London in July before being locked up in various remote castles, mostly in Wales.[21]

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While the English were preoccupied with the siege of Meaux and the defence of Lower Normandy, the Dauphinist garrisons of the Oise and the Somme had continued to expand their reach. In spite of the reverses which they had suffered at Mons-en-Vimeu and Saint-Riquier the previous year, Jacques d'Harcourt's network of garrisoned fortresses now extended east beyond Amiens and south through Vimeu to the River Bresle that marked the limits of English-occupied Normandy. Henry V could not spare the troops to deal with the threat and the Duke of Burgundy had no garrisons in the region. As a result, the Dauphinists encountered no resistance except from the raw levies raised by the towns of Amiens and Abbeville from among their own citizens. At the beginning of March 1422, John of Luxembourg, to whom Philip was increasingly inclined to delegate the conduct of military operations, presided over an assembly of soldiers and officials of Picardy in the castle of Bapaume. They agreed on a concerted effort to push back Harcourt's forces.

John of Luxembourg invaded the region at the end of March 1422. But his forces were modest. Initially no more than a few hundred strong, at its highest point his army numbered about 2,800 men, including a contingent of men-at-arms and archers from the English garrison of Eu under the command of their captain, Ralph

Butler. The campaign opened with the kind of savage demonstration by which commanders now routinely tried to deter resistance. The castle of Quenoy stood over the Roman road from Roye to Amiens. Its Dauphinist garrison held out too long. By the time that they surrendered, their walls were too badly damaged by John of Luxembourg's artillery to withstand an assault, and there was nothing for them to bargain with. The captain negotiated a safe-conduct for himself and abandoned his forty companions to their fate. They were all hanged, some at the castle gate, the rest from the public gibbet at Amiens. After this incident, the Burgundians rapidly cleared all the garrisons which Jacques d'Harcourt had planted on the banks of the Somme, except for his headquarters at Le Crotoy and the towns of Saint-Valéry and Noyelles on the other side of the bay. Thereafter, resistance stiffened, as John tried to advance into Vimeu.

Vimeu was the region lying south of the lower reaches of the Somme. It was dominated by two large Dauphinist garrisons at Airaines and Gamaches, and a string of satellite positions which their captains had planted along the valley of the Bresle. They put up a strong fight. The network of mutual support which linked the Dauphinist garrisons of the north proved highly resilient. Jacques d'Harcourt brought in reinforcements by sea to Le Crotoy, presumably from Brittany, and harassed the invaders from the west. The garrisons of Compiègne and Guise assembled some 800–1,000 mounted men and entered the region from the east. John of Luxembourg's position shortly became untenable. He was forced to abandon the siege of Gamaches in order to meet the new threat. But when he confronted them in battle array, they melted away and passed around his back to plant a new garrison at Mortemer near Montdidier. Airaines eventually surrendered on terms on 11 May. But its garrison simply migrated to Gamaches and other Dauphinist strongholds nearby. Dealing with dispersed and nimble enemies like these was like rolling the stone of Sisyphus. In the middle of May, after less than two months in the field, John of Luxembourg's war treasurers appear to have run out of money. He broke up his army and withdrew.[22]

The surrender of Meaux transformed the situation. It had been the largest and most dangerous Dauphinist garrison in northern France for the past four years. Its conquest, following on the clearance of the valleys of the Seine and the Yonne, freed the approaches to Paris from the east and greatly eased the city's long-running food crisis. The harsh terms of the capitulation removed hundreds of the Dauphin's most experienced soldiers from the war. But the indirect effects proved to be even more significant, for the

capture of the fortress rapidly unravelled the Dauphin's once powerful positions north of Paris. With the English now holding all the major river crossings of the Seine and the Marne, the Dauphin's garrisons in the north were cut off from the main centres of his power in the Loire basin. Help could reach them from outside only by sea through Le Crotoy and Saint-Valéry. The Dauphin's advisers now discovered the disastrous consequences of their decision not to attempt the relief of Meaux. The other Dauphinist garrisons realised that they were on their own. They had no desire to share the fate of the defenders of the Marché. Without the active support of the prince for whose cause they were fighting, they were inclined to get out while they could.[23]

Compiègne was the first to submit. Its captain, Guillaume de Gamaches, quickly concluded that his garrison was no longer viable. Once the largest garrison of the north, its numbers had declined. Its stores were low. Henry V brutally brought his dilemma to a head. He sent messengers into Compiègne to declare that Guillaume's brother the Abbot of St Faron of Meaux, then a prisoner in Paris, would be drowned in the Seine unless the place was surrendered promptly. On 16 May 1422, less than a week after the fall of the Marché, Guillaume de Gamaches entered into a conditional surrender agreement without even undergoing a siege. A date, 18 June, was fixed for the submission of the town. The English were to appear with an army before the gates, and unless the Dauphin in person appeared to challenge them the garrison would deliver the town up with all of their prisoners. Three satellite garrisons in the Oise valley were to be surrendered at the same time, in addition to the newly conquered castle of Mortemer in Picardy.[24]

This was the most spectacular example of Henry V's use of his prisoners as instruments of blackmail. But it was not the only one. Peron de Luppé saved his life by arranging the surrender of his castle at Montaigu, north of Reims, one of the last remaining Dauphinist garrisons of any importance in Champagne, along with two satellite garrisons. His nephew, who had been left in command there, complied without question. Guy de Nesle lord of Offémont went further. Demoralised by his capture and his injuries, he abandoned the Dauphin's cause altogether and submitted to Henry V. He was released without ransom, confirmed in possession of all his domains and pardoned for his years as the Dauphin's principal representative in the north. In return, he swore the oath to uphold the treaty of Troyes. As the Duke of Orléans' lieutenant in the county of Valois he arranged the surrender of all the Duke's castles under his control. These included Louis of Orléans' mighty fortress at Pierrefonds, the great thirteenth-century castle at Crépy-en-

Valois, Guy de Nesle's own castle of Offémont, and several other garrisoned places in the upper valley of the Oise. In all of these places, the garrisons were promised their lives and their liberty. But they were not left free to join other Dauphinist garrisons or occupy new places. They were taken under guard across Normandy to rejoin the Dauphin beyond the Seine. Shortly, the only major Dauphinist fortress left in the valley of the Oise was Poton de Saintrailles' headquarters at Guise. Without the elaborate network of mutual support on which they had previously depended, the smaller garrisons of the Beauvaisis and Champagne withered on the vine. They abandoned their castles, leaving them in flames, and fled with their weapons and their booty to Guise or vanished into the ubiquitous underworld of displaced soldiery. Further west Jacques d'Harcourt, sustained by his lifeline to the sea, still held out at the mouth of the Somme. But he was no longer the force that he had been when he could call on the support of hundreds of mounted men from garrisons across northern France.[25]

The English paused to regroup. The Duke of Bedford had landed with his troops at Harfleur at the beginning of May 1422, accompanied by the Queen. Henry V and his wife entered Paris together in state on 30 May and installed themselves in the Louvre. On 3 June, after the Whitsun celebrations were over, there was a joint session of Henry's English, French and Norman councils in the Hôtel de Nesle, the Parisian mansion which had belonged to the Duke of Berry. The Dukes of Bedford and Exeter, the Earl of March and Arthur de Richemont were present, as well as a large caucus of officials including the Chancellor of France Jean Le Clerc, the First President of the Parlement Philippe de Morvilliers and Bishop Kemp, who had recently replaced Philip Morgan as Chancellor of Normandy. They resolved to complete the destruction of Jacques d'Harcourt's garrisons in Picardy before the Dauphinists had time to recover their balance. John of Luxembourg, who would have been the natural leader of this offensive, had been laid low by illness in his Paris mansion, and his army had dispersed beyond recall. So, while Bedford marched up the Oise to accept the surrender of Compiègne, the Earl of Warwick invaded Picardy with the remnants of the army of Meaux and drafts from the garrisons of Upper Normandy, probably between 2,000 and 3,000 men in all.[26]

Free of the threat from Compiègne in his rear, Warwick made rapid progress through Vimeu. Gamaches, which had successfully fought off the Burgundians in April, was abandoned without a fight. Louis de Chambronne, one of Harcourt's chief allies in the region, negotiated a treaty under which the place was given up in return for a free passage beyond the Seine. A delegation was sent forward to

Le Crotoy in the name of the two Kings of England and France to call on Jacques d'Harcourt to surrender his fortresses. It comprised an English herald, the Master of the Royal Archers Hughes de Lannoy, and two French bishops, one of whom was the fiercely anglophile Bishop of Beauvais Pierre Cauchon and the other Harcourt's own brother Jean Bishop of Amiens. Warwick's demand was eventually rejected, but it is clear that Jacques d'Harcourt was tempted.

At the end of June 1422, the Earl of Warwick laid siege to Saint-Valéry on the south side of the Somme estuary. A fleet of merchantmen requisitioned in the ports of Normandy arrived to seal off the town from the sea. After several days of heavy bombardment, Saint-Valéry's garrison entered into a conditional surrender agreement. By 7 July, Warwick had crossed the ford at Blanchetaque and begun to besiege Le Crotoy. Apart from Guise in the upper valley of the Oise and the small river port of Noyelles at the head of the Somme estuary, this was all that now remained of the great chain of Dauphinist fortresses that had extended across France from the Channel to Champagne only six months before. At the Dauphin's court, morale sank to its lowest point. Alain Chartier completed the *Quadriloge Invectif* in these weeks. 'Now, in this year 1422,' he wrote, 'I have witnessed the King of England, that ancient enemy of this realm, glorying in our shame and humiliation, gorging himself on our spoils, holding all our courage and our great deeds up to ridicule, and drawing the stoutest men of our party to his cause.'[27]

The clearest sign that Henry had effaced the stigma of Baugé was the attitude of the practised trimmers among the princes of France whose main concern was to be on the winning side. The Count of Foix had never confirmed his ambassadors' agreement with Henry V at Rouen the previous year and had never mounted the promised offensive against the Dauphin's government in Languedoc. But with the return of the English King to the Île de France in the autumn of 1421, he had reopened negotiations. His ambassadors appeared at Henry's headquarters at Meaux in the final stages of the siege. On 3 March 1422 they finally swore the oath to uphold the treaty of Troyes on their master's behalf, and Henry conferred the government of Languedoc on him in the name of Charles VI. In return for a subsidy, a large cash advance and the promise of generous territorial concessions at the expense of the French Crown, the Count's ambassadors undertook that he would finally launch his offensive in Languedoc on 1 June. The ambassadors travelled personally to Southampton to collect the advance. Three weeks later, at Dijon, the Duke of Lorraine finally swore, in the presence of

Philip of Burgundy, to recognise Henry V as the heir to the French crown, after two years of temporising.[28]

The most agonising reappraisal, and the most significant, was that of John Duke of Brittany. In the short time since he had made his agreement with the Dauphin at Sablé, the Bretons had had a considerable impact on the course of the fighting. If the English garrisons on the march of Brittany and Maine were on the back foot, it was largely due to the Breton cohorts of Richard de Montfort. At the height of the Dauphin's campaign in the Loire valley in the summer of 1421, the duchy had provided more than a third of his army, about the same as the Scots. But as the siege of Meaux wore on with no attempt at relief, John V decided that he had backed the wrong side. He was very candid about his reasons when the Dauphin's representatives taxed him with it. In the first place, he was still obsessed with the threat from the house of Blois. Olivier de Penthièvre had fled from France with a price on his head after the collapse of his rebellion and was currently sheltering in his family's domains in Hainaut, where John V's agents were trying to track him down and capture him. The Duke was furious that the Dauphin had never honoured his promise at Sablé to dismiss the men around him who had supported Olivier's coup. He drew the understandable conclusion that the Dauphin might yet turn against him. England, with his brother Arthur de Richemont sitting on Henry V's French council, seemed a more dependable ally. Secondly, John V regarded England as the stronger power. He did not have the money, manpower or munitions to sustain a war against them on the scale of 1421. Indeed, with a large part of Henry V's forces in Normandy stationed near his borders, he doubted whether he could even defend his duchy if they were ever to invade it.

John initially encountered some opposition on his council and in the Estates of the duchy. Most of his advisers thought that it was too dangerous to repudiate the solemn engagements which he had made only a year before at Sablé. But once the city of Meaux had fallen and the English had begun to close in on the Marché, John resolved to submit to the English King and recognise the treaty of Troyes. He convened the Estates again and obtained their support. There was a pause for reflection and doubt. But the collapse of the Dauphin's garrisons in the north finally determined him. A large and dignified embassy, comprising no fewer than seventy-six principals and led by his chancellor, was nominated at the end of June and arrived a month later in Paris. They brought with them powers to swear the usual oaths, and promised that the Duke would appear before the King in person as soon as his other preoccupations allowed.[29]

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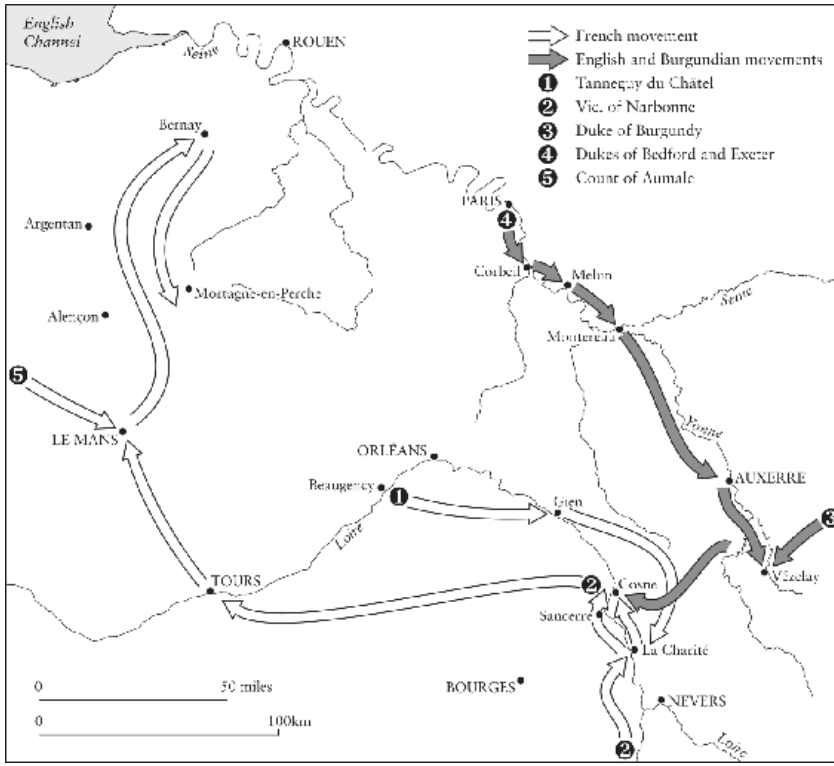
With the tide turning strongly in his favour, Henry V might have been expected to lose interest in a negotiated settlement with the Dauphin. In fact, the summer of 1422 was a time of intense diplomatic activity. Bishop Albergati arrived in France in the middle of May and joined forces with the peacemakers of the Duke of Savoy. In the course of June and July, he covered several hundred miles and met all three principals. Albergati was a discreet man and his reports to the Pope have not survived. We therefore know very little about these exchanges. The Duke of Savoy later complained that Henry been uncooperative. But in fact the King seems to have got on well with the legate. He liked the company of scholars and holy men and was a great patron of the Carthusians. According to the Florentine scholar Poggio Bracciolini, then living in London in the household of Bishop Beaufort, the two men struck up an immediate rapport. For his part the nuncio reported that Henry was genuinely anxious for peace. How realistic these hopes were is hard to say. It is unlikely that any terms acceptable to Henry V would ever have been agreed by the Dauphin, and there was the Duke of Burgundy to satisfy as well. Albergati seems to have been taken aback by the ferocity of the hatreds dividing the two French camps. His mission was probably doomed before it began, even had Henry V lived.[30]

In fact, he was already ill when he met the nuncio and, although neither of them knew it, he had little time left. The summer of 1422 was extremely hot. The court had fled from Paris, which was in the grip of another epidemic of smallpox. At the end of June Henry experienced the symptoms of dysentery. On 7 July he was moved to Vincennes. The news of his condition quickly got out. Processions were organised for his recovery in the streets of Paris. A specialist was summoned from England.[31]

Henry's last illness coincided with a severe military crisis. At the end of May 1422, Tanneguy du Châtel had mustered a large army at Beaugency on the Loire and invaded Philip of Burgundy's county of Nevers, which served as the western bastion of the duchy of Burgundy. The Dauphinist forces comprised about 2,000 French troops and what remained of the army of Scotland, probably between 3,000 and 4,000 men altogether. The Scots had not been paid for some time, and in order to mobilise them Tanneguy was obliged to settle their arrears, 5,415 gold *écus* in undepreciated coin, out of his own pocket. The Dauphinists' campaign plans had been in the making for several weeks, and some inkling of them had reached Paris and Dijon. The Burgundian Marshal of France,

Antoine de Vergy, had visited the region in the spring to organise its defence. Nevertheless, the offensive caught the government off guard when it came. Tanneguy swept through the Nivernais occupying all the principal castles on his route and encountering no serious opposition. In the third week of June, he laid siege to La Charité, a walled town on the right bank of the Loire which was the site of a famous Benedictine abbey and an important stone bridge over the river. There, he joined forces with the Vicomte of Narbonne, who had come up from Languedoc with another army. Fresh companies were reported to be on their way from Italy and Castile to reinforce them. In spite of its importance, there appears to have been no garrison at La Charité. Negotiations were in hand with the inhabitants to station troops in the town, but nothing had come of them by the time the Dauphinist armies arrived.[32]

The Duke of Burgundy was at Troyes when the news of Tanneguy du Châtel's offensive reached him. He had planned to march north to join Henry V in a joint campaign against the last remaining Dauphinist garrisons of the north, and he was occupied with the muster of his retainers in Burgundy and Champagne. The threat to La Charité forced an abrupt change of plan. The Duke returned at once with his army to Dijon. There, he ordered the recruitment of more troops throughout his domains and sent urgent appeals for help to Henry V and the Dukes of Savoy and Lorraine. Some 250 men-at-arms were detached from his army at once and sent to defend La Charité. They were too late. On 25 June, the day after the Duke reached Dijon, the town opened its gates to the Dauphinists and the vital bridge over the Loire fell into their hands. Leaving a garrison to hold it, Tanneguy and the Vicomte of Narbonne marched down the Loire and besieged the other major bridge-town of the region fifteen miles away at Cosne. There was a garrison at Cosne. But it was in no position to withstand a long siege. The captain of the town sent a runner to Philip of Burgundy to warn him that he could not hold out for long. Philip replied that help was on its way. But within a few days the garrison was forced to enter into a conditional surrender agreement. A date, 12 August, was fixed for its surrender unless a relief force had reached the town by then, under the command of the Duke of Burgundy in person.[33]



18 The siege and relief of Cosne, May–August 1422

Henry V, sick as he was, seized upon the chance of a pitched battle with the Dauphin's forces outside Cosne. It offered him the trial by battle that he had been looking for ever since the Dauphin had emerged as his principal opponent in 1419. He agreed with Philip of Burgundy that the challenge should be accepted. The Duke's heralds were sent to agree with the Dauphin's on a site for an arranged battle on the right bank of the Loire near Cosne. Meanwhile, the English and Burgundians bent all their efforts to assembling a large enough army in the short time available. The Earl of Warwick abandoned the siege of Le Crotoy which he had only just begun. A screen of troops under Ralph Butler was left to cover Saint-Valéry until the day appointed for its surrender. John of Luxembourg rose from his sickbed in Paris to find troops in Picardy. Hughes de Lannoy raised companies among the nobility of Flanders. All of these contingents reached Paris in the second half of July. The remaining companies, from the Duke's eastern domains, mustered at the same time in the plain south of Châtillonsur-Seine. The most reliable contemporary estimate puts the strength of the combined force at 12,000 men, of whom about 9,000 were provided by the allies and subjects of the Duke of Burgundy and about 3,000 were English. It was agreed that the entire army would assemble at

Auxerre and march together to Cosne. At Vincennes Henry V, racked by fever and gastroenteritis and unable to keep down the medicines that his doctors prescribed for him, refused to submit to his illness. When the army left Paris in the third week of July 1422, he dragged himself from his bed and had himself carried at its head in a litter. It took his cortège several days to reach Corbeil, and by the time it got there, it was obvious that the King could go no further. He summoned his brother the Duke of Bedford and his uncle the Duke of Exeter and ordered them to take over the command. They marched on without him. In Paris, there were daily processions for his recovery, while across all France prayers and masses were said for the fortunes of each side in the battle to come.[34]

The two allied armies met at Vézelay, south of Auxerre, on 4 August 1422, and reached Cosne six days later on the 10th. There, they found that the besiegers had vanished. The siege lines were empty. There was no sign of the Dauphin or his army. On 12 August, the day appointed for the battle, Philip of Burgundy, the Duke of Bedford and John of Luxembourg drew up their army in battle array at the agreed site. They stood in line all day before returning to their encampments in the evening light. No one appeared to fight them. Eight miles away, on the opposite side of the river, the Earl of Buchan was encamped outside the town of Sancerre with part of the Dauphin's army. Buchan made no attempt to challenge the Anglo-Burgundian force. His sole object was to stop the Anglo-Burgundians crossing into Berry. Small forces had been stationed along the left bank to watch the movements of the English and Burgundians and block the passage of the bridges and fords. On 13 August, John of Luxembourg took part of the Anglo-Burgundian army and raided towards La Charité hoping to find an undefended crossing, but the Dauphinists followed him from the opposite bank until he gave up and returned to Cosne. That evening the Duke of Burgundy and the Duke of Bedford marched away with their men.[35]

The Dauphin's commanders had given up all thought of fighting a pitched battle at least two weeks before, when they became aware of the scale of the other side's preparations. The exact strength of their own army is not known, but it was certainly much smaller than their enemy's. The Anglo-Burgundians claimed the moral high ground, and perhaps they were entitled to it. But the strategic gains were all on the Dauphin's side. His captains had not gained Cosne. The town received a Burgundian garrison and the hostages which it had given for its surrender were returned. But he had achieved his objectives. La Charité, a major bridgehead into Burgundian territory, remained in his hands, and the plans of Henry and Philip

of Burgundy for a summer campaign in the north had been spiked. The Earl of Warwick had been forced to lift the siege of Le Crotoy, and a vital respite had been given to the Dauphin's last surviving garrison on the Oise, at Guise.

Towards the end of July 1422, after Buchan and Tanneguy du Châtel had decided not to fight at Cosne, they sent the Vicomte of Narbonne with part of the army west to join the Count of Aumale on the march of Maine. They expected to find Lower Normandy denuded of troops to fill the ranks of the Anglo-Burgundian army. They were not disappointed. Not only were all the principal English captains and many of the garrison troops with Bedford in the Nivernais, but a large number of men had just been withdrawn from the garrisons of Lower Normandy and ordered north to be present at the surrender of Saint-Valéry, which was due to open its gates on 4 September. As a result, Aumale and Narbonne were able to do considerable damage with very little opposition. They marched deep into Normandy, penetrating within forty miles of Rouen. Bernay, an unwalled town with no garrison, was sacked. The English commander in the sector, Thomas Lord Scales, came up with a field force of a few hundred men, but they were outnumbered and driven off with heavy losses. As the Dauphinists turned for home, another local captain, Sir Philip Branch, collected a field force from the residues of nearby garrisons, and valiantly tried to block the invaders' retreat at Mortagne in Perche. On 14 August his men, dismounted in carefully prepared positions and protected by a line of stakes, determined to take on a far stronger enemy. But the odds were too great. They were scattered by a single cavalry charge. Many of them were killed or captured in the pursuit.

The strategic impact of this raid was small, but magnified by report. The Dauphinists claimed an impossibly high tally of casualties. The Italian news network even reported that the Vicomte of Narbonne's army had entered Paris. For the English it illustrated once more the abiding problems of military occupation. They were everywhere overstretched. Unable to come to grips with their enemy on their own terms, they were compelled to fight an expensive war of static defence in Normandy and debilitating sieges everywhere else. In order to take possession of Saint-Valéry and contribute some 3,000 men to the army of Cosne they had had to reduce their strength in Normandy below the minimum level consistent with effective defence. Even companies that were never involved in a fight were losing men all the time to sickness and desertion. In the four months since the Duke of Bedford had last landed in France, his company had lost nearly a quarter of its strength. For the moment, losses like these were being made good

with fresh drafts from England. But for how much longer?[36]

*

After lying sick at Corbeil for a fortnight, Henry V was loaded onto a barge and rowed slowly back down the Seine towards Paris. Reaching the bridge at Charenton on 13 August, he disembarked and tried to mount a horse, but had only gone a few paces before he was obliged to dismount and allow himself to be carried in a litter to Vincennes. A few days after this the Duke of Bedford, passing through Troyes with the English army, was greeted by a messenger with the news that the King was dying. On 26 August, Henry executed a final codicil to his will. His political testament was delivered orally to a handful of intimates gathered around his bed on the evening of 30 August: the Dukes of Bedford and Exeter, the Earl of Warwick, Louis Robesart and a few household servants, the men that he had trusted most in his lifetime. Humphrey Duke of Gloucester was to be Protector of England and guardian of the young King during his minority. The man appointed to carry on his work in France was the Duke of Bedford, the ablest of his brothers. Until Henry's infant son was in a position to govern, Bedford was to be Keeper of Normandy and also, unless the Duke of Burgundy claimed the position, Regent of France. As for the task ahead, Henry said, he had embarked on the conquest of the country not from personal ambition or vanity but to obtain justice. He charged Bedford to carry on the war until peace had been made or the whole of France had accepted the treaty of Troyes. At all costs he was to maintain the Burgundian alliance on which the whole English position in France depended. The Duke of Orléans and the other great prisoners of Agincourt and Meaux were never to be released while the young Henry was a minor. It was an uncompromising message. Yet even in his last hours, Henry was realistic enough to appreciate that failing an unexpected collapse of the Kingdom of Bourges a negotiated settlement was likely to be the only way out for England. Bedford, he said, should make no treaty with the Dauphin which did not keep the duchy of Normandy for England. This is perhaps the best clue to the kind of negotiated settlement that he had had in mind in his exchanges with Niccolò Albergati. At two o'clock in the morning of 31 August 1422, Henry died. He was thirty-six years old.[37]

To his English subjects, Henry V was the 'noble prince and victoriouse King, flour in his tym on Christen chivalrie'. He was the outstanding English soldier of the late middle ages: courageous, self-confident, cool under pressure, an inspirational leader. Above all, he had a clear idea of what he wanted and understood how to use force

to maximum effect. His tactical and strategic judgments, and the skill with which he exploited his victories politically, put him in a class of his own among his contemporaries. By the French he was admired not just as a soldier but as a ‘man of justice’, the phrase used by several writers of fifteenth-century France, including many whose political sympathies lay with the Dauphin. By this, they meant that he was an upright man of sober personal life and a rigorous disciplinarian who made himself feared, as medieval sentiment expected a king to do. ‘No ruler of his time’, wrote the official historiographer of the future Charles VII, ‘was more obviously fitted by his talents and his wisdom to conquer and occupy another country.’ ‘And to hold on to it once conquered,’ added Charles VII’s Chancellor Jean Jouvenel the Younger. His achievement in uniting his own countrymen behind him and then conquering and occupying Normandy and seizing control of the central organs of the French state was extraordinary. Yet it was by its nature impermanent. His ambitions depended too much on the slender resources of his English kingdom. His conquests had owed too much to the extraordinary circumstances of France during his reign: fifteen years of civil war, the backlash provoked by the murder of John the Fearless, the political and military misjudgments of the Dauphin’s advisers. And they had owed too much to Henry’s personal qualities: his reputation, his military skills and his iron will and energy.

Chancellor Langley was right when he told Parliament in 1423 that Henry had personally embodied the dual monarchy. Yet the King had never been able to present himself as the authentically French ruler envisaged by those Frenchmen who had accepted the treaty of Troyes. Few things were more revealing than the circumstances of his death. The men who gathered around his deathbed in a French royal castle on the night of 30 August were all native Englishmen apart from the Hainauter Louis Robesart who was naturalised in England. Outside Normandy, the English King owed his status in France to the Burgundian alliance. But the Duke of Burgundy was an ally of necessity, with no more affection for the dying Henry than he had had for the living one. Hughes de Lannoy arrived at Vincennes as his representative in the King’s last days and had a brief interview with Henry before returning to report to his master. Philip himself stayed outside Paris in the old castle of Louis of Orléans at Brie-Comte-Robert until Henry’s death was confirmed. He was ostentatiously absent from the obsequies.[38]

Immediately after his death, the King was eviscerated and embalmed according to the ritual ways of the English royal house. There were voices raised to suggest that he should be buried in

France, the realm of which he was the adoptive ruler. But the King had directed in his will that he should be laid to rest in England. In the event, it was only his heart, removed from the body to assist its conservation but to medieval minds the vital source of wisdom, courage and sin, which remained in France. It was interred in the Benedictine abbey of Saint-Maur-les-Fossés in the south-eastern suburbs of Paris. On 14 September 1422 the body, enclosed in a lead coffin, was carried from Vincennes to Saint-Denis, where it lay all night before the high altar, surrounded by monks praying for the dead man's soul. On the following day it began its journey home. The coffin was placed on a large wheeled hearse. In accordance with a tradition dating back to English royal funerals of the previous century, it was surmounted by a life-size effigy beneath a silk canopy, dressed in royal robes with a crown on its head, a sceptre in its right hand and a golden apple in its left. Four horses drew the great catafalque slowly down the Seine valley to Rouen, where the ceremonies at Saint-Denis were repeated in the cathedral. From Rouen it passed through the towns of Picardy to Calais, escorted by his young widow, forty liveried torch-bearers, the black-robed members of his household, and a crowd of English noblemen and chanting clergy. Two dozen wagons followed behind with the dead man's personal effects. Henry V was borne through the city of London by the same processional route as he had taken on his triumphal reception after the battle of Agincourt. He was finally laid to rest in Westminster Abbey by the tomb of Edward the Confessor. In the middle of the burial service, a mounted knight rode up to the high altar wearing the dead King's crown and his armour with his coat of arms, which were stripped from him and put away, a moment charged with symbolism. In due course, a fine chantry chapel was erected above the tomb and an effigy was commissioned in silver and silver gilt by Catherine of France. On the cornice of the platform, an insensitive age would later commission a carved Latin epitaph: 'Here lies Henry V, harrier of the French.'[39]

No one had expected Charles VI, frail in health and prematurely aged at fifty-four, to survive his vigorous young son-in-law. The French King had led a wretched existence since the treaty of Troyes, alternately secluded behind the gates of his palaces or carried about in Henry V's baggage train to serve as a mascot for the dual monarchy. The English knew better than to humiliate a man whom his subjects both pitied and venerated. They allowed him an income which was adequate for his limited needs. They provided him with a dignified household in which all the principal offices were held by reliable Burgundian partisans. But apart from these, he had no courtiers and few companions. He still occasionally received

ambassadors and participated in ceremonial occasions, public charades which the politicians exploited for their own purposes. The Queen occasionally joined him for these, but her time had passed. There was nothing left of their marriage. With Isabelle's consent, Charles had been given a concubine years before, the '*petite reine*' Odette de Champdivers, a pretty young girl, formerly a lady in waiting to the Duchess of Brittany, with whom he had at least one child. Charles remained a pathetic figure. He passed his days locked up in his rooms when he was undergoing a psychotic episode, or playing *paume* and board games with his pages and hunting or pulling a bow at the butts when he was fit enough. The occasional opinions attributed to him suggest that he had just enough wit to understand the difference between his status and his power.

On 19 September 1422, Charles returned from Senlis and disappeared behind the walls of the Hôtel Saint-Pol. Early in October, he went down with a high temperature. After three weeks of intermittent fever, he died on the morning of 21 October, attended by his chaplains, his chancellor and first chamberlain and a small group of household officers, all of them creatures of the Duke of Burgundy. The body was laid out on his bed draped in gold cloth with the face exposed while the canons of the Sainte-Chapelle gathered round endlessly repeating the vigils of the dead by the ghostly light of eight candles. As the news spread through the city, the Parisians began to file through the darkened rooms of the royal apartments to pay their respects.[40]

Funerals are theatrical spectacles, symbols of loss and continuity, and none more so than the funerals of princes. Charles VI of France was not buried for nearly three weeks after his death. The delay was due partly to the fact that it was more than forty years since the last royal funeral. With the dispersal of the court and the constant purges of the civil service no one could remember the protocol. The prolonged obsequies were finally held between 9 and 11 November according to an order of ceremony specially written for the occasion. They bore the strong imprint of English practice. The coffin was taken from the royal chapel in the Hôtel Saint-Pol at dusk and carried to Notre-Dame to rest in front of the high altar before its final journey to the mausoleum of the French monarchy at Saint-Denis. The lead coffin was carried on a litter so heavy that the bearers had to put it down at regular intervals to rest, and so broad that masons had to hack off projecting corbels in the narrow streets to allow it to pass. Above the coffin, lying on blue satin cushions beneath a silk canopy, was a lifelike effigy of the dead man, dressed in silk and cloth of gold and wearing velvet shoes embroidered with the *fleur-de-lys* on its feet and a silver crown encrusted with pearls at

its head. The face, hands and feet were modelled in boiled leather from casts and then painted in flesh tones. A gold sceptre and staff were placed in its hands. The symbolism was borrowed from the processional catafalque made for Henry V two months before. The whole ceremony was conceived as a macabre reversal of the King's *joyeuse entrée* into the city after his coronation in 1380. Twenty-four criers went ahead ringing their bells while the procession formed up around the hearse: 200 torch-bearers, the friars of the four mendicant orders, the Rector and masters of the University, nine mitred bishops and abbots, the officers of the municipality of Paris, the chamberlains and officers of the royal household, the judges of the Parlement, the royal councillors, the principal officials of the offices of state, and behind them the undifferentiated mass of ordinary Parisians.

The grandeur could hardly conceal the dismal character of the occasion. Many must have thought that they were witnessing the final public ceremony of France's indigenous monarchy. A few people old enough to have witnessed the *joyeuse entrée* of 1380 remembered that Charles had been escorted then by all the princes of the royal house and most of the greatest noblemen of France. Not a single prince was present to accompany his corpse forty-two years later. His widow took no part in the ceremony, preferring to remain secluded in her rooms in the Hôtel Saint-Pol. His only surviving son was in Berry fighting a civil war as the head of a rival state in southern France. His youngest daughter was in England, the widow of his son's mortal enemy, and his eldest in Brittany, the wife of England's most recent ally, John V de Montfort. The Dukes of Orléans and Bourbon were prisoners of war in England. The Duke of Burgundy had left Paris for Flanders during the King's last illness. He was said to be troubled about his place in the order of precedence, and sent a group of his councillors with his excuses. Traditionally, the dead king's heir participated as the chief mourner. In 1422, there was no heir. Tradition was maintained by a solitary figure in a black cape and hat following the coffin on foot behind the household officers and some distance in front of the other official mourners. It was the Regent of France, John of Lancaster Duke of Bedford.[41]

Notes

1

Calais: 'Chron. Cordeliers', 295. English plans, movements: *Reg. Jurade,* ii, 604; *Coll. doc. Angleterre*, 231; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 309. Burgundian plans: BN Coll. Bourgogne 57, fol. 299. Burgundian numbers: *Chastellain, *Chron.*, i, 274–7 (wrongly assigned to 1422); Plancher, iv, 30–1 (muster).

Garrisons: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 35; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 290, 294; *Beaucourt, i, 454–5 (Villeneuve). Paris: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 37; *Journ. B. Paris*, 154–5. Conference: AD Côte d'Or B11942/38bis (Philip to his council, 27 June); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 45–6; *Itin. Ph. le Bon*, 17. Bail-out: AD B1612, fol. 34vo.

2

Galardon: *Lettres Tours,* 37–9; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 124; Cagny, *Chron.*, 122; 'Geste des nobles', 181–2. Chartres: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 44–5; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 19; and see reviews at Chartres, 1–10 July (*Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 1086; BN PO 418/des Bordes/50; 1963/Mignon/7–8; 2096/La Negue/2–3; etc.) Withdrawal: 'Chron. Cordeliers', 298; *Ord.*, xi, 126; *Beaucourt, i, 461–2. Dates: ibid., i, 229.

3

Mantes: *Coll. doc. Angleterre*, 231; *Reg. Jurade*, ii, 604; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 296–7; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 47–8; AD Côte d'Or B1617, fol. 94 (Philip's letter from Mantes). Dreux: Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 309–10; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 466; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 392–3. Dauphin: Beaucourt, i, 231. Blois: *Ord.*, xi, 126–8.

4

Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 311; *Cron. Norm.*, 66; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 298; *Journ. B. Paris*, 157; *Reg. Jurade*, ii, 604; PRO C64/16, m. 26d (troops from Normandy).

5

*Beaucourt, i, 231; *Reg. Jurade*, ii, 604–5; *Daumet, 223; *Inv. AC Orléans*, i, 96; 'Geste des nobles', 183; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 311–13, 314; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 102–3; *Cron. Norm.*, 66–7. Fréteval (29 Aug.): BN PO 1463/Mignon/9, 1394/de la Grange/31, 1940/Mesières/17, etc. Châteaudun (1 Sept.): *Reg. Dunois*, 6. Bretons: BN Clair. 96, p. 7495; BN Fr. n.a. 8605, fols 85–86vo; *Preuves Bretagne*, ii, 1088–9; BL Add. Chart. 11474. Other French contingents: *Preuves Bretagne,* ii, 965; BN Fr. n.a. 8605, fols 87–91. Beaugency bridge: Mesqui (1986), 98 (fig. 93), 100. English strength: Wylie and Waugh, iii, 331nn[1], [2].

6

'Chron. Cordeliers', 297–8, 296–305; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 47–69; Raoulet, 'Chron.', 177–82; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, ii, 40–44; Fenin, *Mém.*, 157–72; *Itin. Ph. le Bon,* 18–19. Rue: AD Côte d'Or B1617, fols 61–61vo, 94–94vo, 128–128vo. 12,000 *écus*: AD Côte d'Or B1612, fols 34vo–35vo, B1617, fol. 36. Payroll strength (not inc. urban levies): AD Côte d'Or B1611, fols 253–260vo, B1612, fols 62vo, 301vo–306, B1617, fols 94vo–96, 123vo–124. Artillery, towns: AD Côte d'Or B1617, fol. 95vo; *Inv. AC Amiens*, iv, 92–3. Surrender of St-Riquier: AD Côte d'Or B1617, fols 36vo–37, 37vo–38, 59–59vo, 123–123vo, 124–124vo. Harcourt lieutenant: BN Fr. n.a. 7625, fol. 246.

7

Coinage: Dieudonné, 499 (1912), 263–5; Lafaurie, *Monnaies*, i, nos 417–18; Fourquin, 316; *Ord.*, xi, 122–6; *Journ. B. Paris*, 154, 155, 158; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 290; Cochon, *Chron.*, 343; Fenin, *Mém.*, 189; AN JJ171/483 (butcher). Food: Fourquin, 315; *Journ. B. Paris*, 154–5, 157; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 294.

8

*Beaucourt, i, 454–5; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 290; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 313–14; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 305; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 27; *Reg. Jurade*, ii, 605.

9
Reg. Jurade, ii, 605; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 315–17, 320; 'Cron. Norm.', 68; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 71; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, ii, 44–5; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 305–6. On Chissay: *Gall. reg.*, iv, no. 15322; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 450. On Vaurus: BN Fr. 5061, fol. 117vo (Barbazan's evidence at trial); Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 386–7. On Peron de Luppé: BN Clair. 67/5221. Topography: Carro, *Histoire de Meaux* (1865), 9–12, 81–4, 103–6, 162–3. English numbers: PRO E101/50/10, 11.

10
Reg. Jurade, ii, 605; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 319–20; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 448; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 385–6; *Journ. B. Paris*, 160–1; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 310; Fenin, *Mém.*, 176; Waurin, *Rec. cron.*, ii, 403. Numbers: PRO E101/50/10, 11. Cornwall: Reeves, 168–72.

11
Numbers: Newhall (1924), 216–22, corrected by Wylie and Waugh, iii, 240–1; PRO E101/50/10. Lower Normandy: BL Add. Chart. 11474; *Rôles Normands*, no. 1052; London, Coll. Arms MS 9, fol. 45vo; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 80–1, 81; Bower, *Scotichron.*, viii, 124; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 307.

12
Norman feudal host: Allmand (1983), 192–3; Curry (1988), 240–3, 253–4; *Rôles Normands*, no. 1052 (Nov.); PRO C64/16, mm. 12d, 20d, 36d. Parisians: AD Côte d'Or B1612, fol. 92vo; Grassoreille, 138. Richemont: *Daumet (1898), 223; Foed., x, 157–8; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 81.

13
Mollat (1958), 301–3, 306.

14
Vaughan (1970), 29–31.

15
English reinforcements: PRO E403/652, m. 8 (1 Dec.); PRO E28/36 (7 Feb. 1422), E101/70/6 (739–50), E101/71/1 (751–796); *Foed.*, x, 208–9. Others: *Foed.*, x, 161–3, 167–8; Reitemeier, 317–19.

16
Birth: *Cal. Letter Books*, I, 264; *Brut*, ii, 448; *Journ. B. Paris*, 163; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 33; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 321. D. of Burgundy at Meaux: *Itin. Ph. le Bon,* 22; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 35–6. Charles VI: *Ord.*, xi, 154–6; *Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 798. Savoy mediation: *Dickinson, 209–10 (Burgundian memorandum, May 1435); *Itin. Ph. le Bon*, 22, 23; Chastellain, *Chron.*, i, 293–4; *Reg. Consul. Lyon*, ii, 4–5. Pope: Harvey (1993), 134, 135; Raynaldus, *Ann. eccl.*, xxvii, 538–40.

17
Ord., xi, 141–2, 159–60; Beaucourt, i, 406–19.

18
Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 39–40; *Journ. B. Paris,* 166–8; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 386–7; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 81–3; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 309–10; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 320–1, 322; Fenin, *Mém.*, 173–4.

19
Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 322–6.

20
Foed., x, 212–14 (corrected from Gregory, 'Chron.', 142–8). On Ph. de Gamaches: *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 452.

21
Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 45, 49; *Journ. B. Paris*, 169–72, 173; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 327–8; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 315; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 95–

6; Le Fèvre, *Chron.*, ii, 54–5; Fenin, *Mém.*, 175–6; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 388. Prisoners in England: *Foed.*, x, 214–15; *Proc. PC*, ii, 335–6, iii, 27, 61; PRO E364/55, mm. 5d (Hilton), E364/56, m. 1 (Helegh, Barneby, Salghall, Strange), m. 2d (Corbet), m. 3 (Bold), m. 5d (Waterton), E403/655, m. 17 (29 July).

22
'Chron. Cordeliers', 309, 310, 311–14, 316–17; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 83–5, 87–91; Fenin, *Mém.*, 177–81. English: *Inv. AC Amiens*, ii, 92–3; PRO C64/17, m. 25d. Somme garrisons (Pont-Rémy, Eaucourt, Moreuil): *Inv. AC Amiens*, ii, 92–3, 94, 94–5.

23
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 97.

24
*Carolus-Barré (1988), 385, 387–92; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 97–8; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 452; Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 388. Luppé: 'Chron. Cordeliers', 317; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 98.

25
Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 96–8; *Gut (1996), 162–3, 271–7.

26
PRO E403/655, m. 17 (29 July) (Bedford); Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 98–100, 103; Carolus-Barré (1988), 385; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 49–50, 51; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 316–17.

27
Fenin, *Mém.*, 181–2; Chartier, *Quad. Invect.*, 7. Gamaches: *Fenin, *Mém.*, 302–6; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 98, 101. On Louis de Chambronne: ibid., iv, 21. St-Valéry: PRO C64/17, m. 15d; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 101–2; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 320. Le Crotoy: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 103–4; PRO E364/69, mm. 6, 6d, 7 (Philip) (siege).

28
Foix: *Foed.*, x, 176–95. Payments: ibid., 204; PRO E403/655, mm. 1, 6 (20 Apr., 28 May). Lorraine: *Foed.*, ix, 909–10; *Choix de pièces*, i, 412–13; *Plancher, iv, no. 17.

29
*Fornier, ii, 299 (report on Gélu's mission to Brittany, early 1423); *Foed.*, x, 145, 206–8, 220–1, 228–9; *Preuves Bretagne,* ii, 1112–13, 1130, 1138; Morice and Taillandier, i, 487–8. Breton troops: BN Fr. 26044/5670–5672 (4,000 men-at-arms and 1,500 bowmen). Embassy: Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 54–5; PRO E364/69, m. 6d (Philip); *Comptes de l'hôtel,* 284–5.

30
Reg. Consul. Lyon, ii, 4–5; *Comptes de l'hôtel*, 284; *Dickinson, 210; Martin V, 'Korr.', no. 260; Beaucourt, ii, 322; Poggio, 'Oratio in funere Card. S Crucis', *Opera* (Basel, 1538), 264–5; Zeno, 'Vita', 470; Sigonio, 'Vita', 480.

31
Journ. B. Paris, 175; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 772; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 52–3; PRO E403/655, m. 11 (14 July) (specialist).

32
Preuves Bretagne, ii, 1120–3; Arsenal 4522, fol. 18vo; *Beaucourt, i, 466–7, 470; *Mém. France et Bourgogne*, ii, 236; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 319; Plancher, iv, 54; Flamare, i, 131–3; AD Côte d'Or B1617, fols 124vo–125, 125vo (scouting parties sent from Troyes and Dijon).

33
Troyes, Dijon: *Inv. AD Nord*, ii, 272–3; *Itin. Ph. le Bon,* 25. Orders from Dijon: AD Nord B1926/54999; BN Coll. Bourgogne 29, fol. 43; AD Côte

d'Or B1617, fols 106, 106vo, 125vo–126vo, 127–127vo. Fall of La Charité: Bossuat (1936), 15–16; *Preuves Bretagne,* ii, 1123; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 319; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 106. Cosne: Fenin, *Mém.*, 183–4; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 106; 'Geste des nobles', 185; *Chron. Pucelle,* 210; AD Côte d'Or B1617, fols 106–106vo (captain's appeal).

34

Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 329–30; 'Gestes des nobles', 185; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 321; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 106–7; Fenin, *Mém.*, 184, 185; Plancher, iv, 55–6; *St Albans Chron.*, ii, 772; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 54–6. St-Valery: Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 102–3; PRO C64/17, m. 9d. Prayers: Wylie and Waugh, iii, 410 and n7. Henry was at Corbeil by 25 July: PRO C64/17, m. 11.

35

Itin. Ph. le Bon, 25–6; Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 330; 'Geste des nobles', 185–6; Héraut Berry, *Chron.*, 105–6; 'Chron. Cordeliers', 321–2; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 107–8.

36

Cagny, *Chron.*, 124–5; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 474–8; *Actes Chanc. Henri VI,* I, 31–3. St-Valéry: PRO C64/17, m. 9d. News: Morosini, *Chron.*, ii, 228. Bedford's losses: Wylie and Waugh, iii, 411n6.

37

Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 330–4; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 56–7; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 109–12; Plancher, iv, 59; *Strong, 98–100; *Foed.*, x, 253.

38

Chron. R. St-Denis, vi, 481 (this section by Jean Chartier); Jouvenel, *Hist.*, 395; Fenin, *Mém.*, 186; Cagny, *Chron.*, 126; Chastellain, *Chron.*, i, 334; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 109, 111; *Itin. Ph. le Bon*, 26; *Parl. Rolls*, x, 77 [2].

39

Pseudo-Elmham, *Vita*, 336–8; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 58; *Chron. R. St-Denis,* vi, 482–4; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 113–16; *St Albans Chron.,* ii, 776–8; *Brut*, ii, 430, 448, 493–4; *Book London English*, 144–6. Effigy tradition: Giesey, 80–5.

40

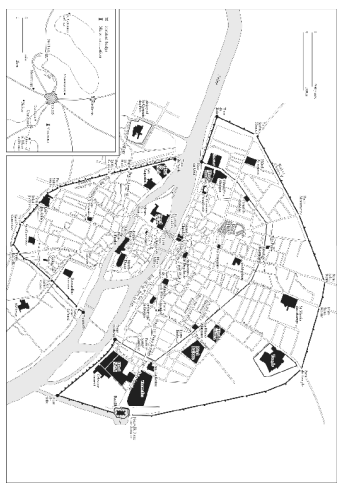
Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 58, 59; 'Chron. Cordeliers', vi, 324; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 488; *Journ. B. Paris*, 177. Charles's last years: *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 486–8; Famiglietti, 215n125; *Comptes de l'hôtel*, 275, 283; Grandeau (1970), 135.

41

Official 'Cérémonial' in *Giesey, 197–201, cf. 99–104, 129–32; Grandeau (1970); *Journ. B. Paris*, 178–81; *Chron. R. St-Denis*, vi, 488–90; Monstrelet, *Chron.*, iv, 121–4; Fauquembergue, *Journ.*, ii, 70–2. Philip: Plancher, iv, 62–3.

General Maps

I Provinces of France and French-speaking territories



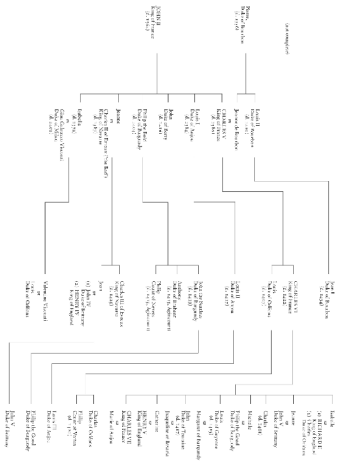
II Paris

III The Île de France, Picardy and the march of Flanders

IV Normandy

Royal House of France

(not complete)



Abbreviations

ABSHF	*Annuaire-Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de France*
AC	Archives Communales
AD	Archives Départmentales
AHG	*Archives historiques du Département de la Gironde*
AHP	*Archives historiques du Poitou*
AHSA	*Archives historiques de la Saintonge et de l'Aunis*
AN	Archives Nationales (Paris)
BCRH	*Bulletin de la Commission Royale d'Histoire*
BEC	*Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*
BIHR	*Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*
BJRL	*Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*
BL	British Library (London)
BN	Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris)
BPH	*Bulletin philologique et historique du Comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques*
BSHP	*Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris*

CCR	*Calendar of Close Rolls*
CFR	*Calendar of Fine Rolls*
CPR	*Calendar of Patent Rolls*
DKR	*Annual Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records*
EHR	*English Historical Review*
GEC	*Complete Peerage*
HoC	*History of Parliament. The House of Commons, 1386–1421*
MSHP	*Mémoires de la Société de l'Histoire de Paris*
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*
PRO	Public Record Office (London) [The National Archives]
VCH	*Victoria History of the Counties of England*

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By the Same Author

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